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### **Exploring inclusive practice**

**the beliefs and practices of classroom teachers in two mainstream primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan, in relation to children with special needs**

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*Awarding institution:*  
King's College London

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**Exploring inclusive practice: the beliefs and  
practices of classroom teachers in two mainstream  
primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan, in relation to  
children with special needs**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
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King's College London

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Allah enjoins to do justice and to adopt good behaviour... He exhorts you, so that you may be mindful (Al Quran, 16:90).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) most explicitly says: “Verily, God does not look at your bodies or your appearances, but looks into your hearts” (Muslim, 2564).

This humble study is dedicated to my most beloved parents. I hope I have been able to fulfil their dream. I dedicate this thesis with love to both of them. May Allah SWT have mercy on them. Ameen.

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Despite this list of acknowledgements, it remains to say that the mistakes and opinions of this thesis are my own, and for them I take full responsibility.

## **Abstract**

This thesis is an exploratory empirical study of the development of inclusive practices in two mainstream private primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan. While inclusion in education is generally conceived of as a wide-ranging attempt to ensure that all children's rights to an education are met, in Pakistan, this term is most frequently applied in the context of educating those who are deemed to have some learning difficulties or who have some form of disability. In Pakistan, there is a rhetorical commitment about the importance of inclusion evident at the national level, specifically with reference to children with special needs (CWSN). The Government of Pakistan has been a signatory to many of the international documents that argue for inclusion as well as to the Salamanca Statement from UNESCO (1994) that clearly outlines the imperatives of inclusive education and how these should be implemented. However, in practice, the turbulent social context in Pakistan means that while the nation may well sign up to international agreements in the area of inclusion, the socioeconomic position of the country as well as its complex geo-political and cultural make up, including the widespread marginalisation that occurs based on factors like caste, race and disability, have hindered the implementation of inclusive education.

This study draws on the beliefs and practices of classroom teachers in two schools in Karachi where attempts are being made to include children with special educational needs. Through analysis of 30 semi-structured interviews, teachers' views on their school's ethos and their beliefs about special needs and inclusion are explored as well as how these perspectives influence their pedagogical practices in addressing the inclusion of CWSN in their mainstream classrooms. Two theoretical dimensions frame this study. First, the study draws on inclusion based on a human rights perspective, where education is positioned as a fundamental right of 'all children' including those who are deemed as having special needs/disability (UNESCO, 1994, 2000, 2012). Second, the study is underpinned by the stance that inclusion can only be promoted where a whole school positive perspective is adopted.

The findings of the study are organised under three main themes. The first set relates to teachers' views about their school's whole school approaches in creating

and promoting an ethos of inclusion. Both schools were working to include CWSN based on a human rights perspective, but there were some points of tension as the two schools were simultaneously pursuing academic excellence, as illustrated in their mission statements. There was a trade off between the extent to which they could provide sufficient support for CWSN so as to give them meaningful learning experiences, whilst maintaining high standards for all. The second set of findings concerns teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion. Teachers held a range of different perspectives; while the majority were positive about advocating for inclusion in the mainstream setting, a minority questioned this approach citing the limitations posed by contextual factors of lack of time, limited support, poor resources and inadequate training. Teachers reflected on how their beliefs had undergone changes, positive and negative, through their experiences of working with CWSN. From what the teachers reported, they used various forms of differentiation in order to meet the needs of the children in their classrooms although many of the teachers were concerned about their own lack of professional preparation in this area of pedagogy. One key finding was the collaborative practice evident in both schools, between the leaders and teachers, teachers and teachers as well as teachers and parents, to ensure that CWSN were being included in both schools.

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## **List of abbreviations**

CARE - Cooperation for Advancement, Rehabilitation and Organisation

CWSN - Children with Special Needs

CS - Centenary School

DfES - Department for Education and Skills

FN - Field Note

GoP - Government of Pakistan

JICA – Japan International Cooperation Agency

MS - Millennium School

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

PWD - People with Disabilities

TCF – The Citizens Foundation

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

U.N. – United Nations

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction to the Study**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter serves as an introduction to my research study, beginning with my rationale for undertaking this investigation. The key terminologies I have used in this work as well as the complexities involved in their understanding and usage are explained. The issues involved in translating inclusive education policy into practice in the context of children with special educational needs are then reviewed. The chapter then details the theoretical perspective of human rights and what is meant by a whole school approach, which inform this study. I then outline the aims of this thesis, and my research questions and the chapter ends with presentation of its structure.

#### **1.2. Rationale of the study**

This thesis is an exploratory empirical study of the development of inclusive practices undertaken in two mainstream private primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan. While inclusion in education is generally conceived of as a wide-ranging attempt to ensure that all children's rights to an education are met, in this study it is used in the context of educating those who are deemed to have some learning difficulties or who have some form of disability. My study explores inclusion as it relates to children with special needs (CWSN - I explain this term later in the chapter) who attend these two mainstream schools in Pakistan. Through analysis of 30 semi-structured interviews, teachers' views on their school's approach to meeting these needs and the teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion are explored as well as how these perspectives influence their pedagogical practices in addressing inclusion of CWSN in their mainstream classrooms.

There is a rhetorical commitment about the importance of inclusion evident in Pakistan at the state level, specifically with reference to CWSN. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) has been a signatory to many of the international documents that argue for inclusion as well as to the important Salamanca Statement from UNESCO, (1994) that clearly outlines the imperatives of inclusive education (IE)

and how these should be implemented. The *Salamanca Statement* (UNESCO, 1994) is based on a human rights perspective on education, being concerned with:

Reaffirming the right to education of every individual, as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and renewing the pledge made by the world community at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All to ensure that right for all regardless of individual differences. (UNESCO, 1994, p. vii)

The Guidelines for Action in the Statement are clear that ‘most of the required changes do not relate exclusively to children with special educational needs’ (SEN) (p. 21), but rather, the intention is to promote the rights of all children to a decent education, although in many cases, as in Pakistan, the emphasis in practice has been with what the statement refers to as ‘children with special educational needs’.

Before 1994, Pakistan had enacted legislation that was intended to promote policies of mainstream provision and integration of children with learning difficulties. Specifically, two main legislative policies both entitled ‘National Policies for People with Disabilities’ (GoP, 1986 & 1988) indicate that the approach taken was focused on ‘people with disabilities’ rather than any wider human rights inclusive agenda. However, because of a lack of resources, inept planning and poor execution, even these less holistic approaches could not be widely implemented at the ground level. In the aftermath of becoming a signatory to many of the international documents, including the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1990, 1994, 2000, 2001), a more holistic approach started to appear in the various national policies related to disabilities and disability education in Pakistan (GoP, 2002). In sum, Pakistan has endorsed international calls for inclusive education (meaning for all children), although in practice its focus has mainly been on the educational provision for a group of children frequently labelled as ‘children with disabilities’. What is already evident then is that there is some linguistic slippage between the complex categorisations of children deemed to have special educational needs, learning difficulties and disabilities, in that these terms are used interchangeably in the Pakistani context.

In practice, the turbulent social context in Pakistan means that while the nation may well have signed up to international agreements in the area of inclusion, the



socioeconomic position of the country as well as its complex geo-political and cultural make up, including the widespread marginalisation that occurs based on factors like caste, race and disability, have hindered the propagation and implementation of inclusive education (Azad, 2005; GoP, 2009; Rieser, 2012). The country has battled in the last ten years, on the one hand, with political turmoil and instability and on the other, dealing with natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods (Jan, 2010). Consequently, amidst all the political and natural calamities, government priorities have necessarily been focused on these rather than on civil matters, such as education. In turn, the education of children and adults who have various special needs and/or disabilities (either short or longer term) is not seen as a priority in the country as is the case in many other so-called 'less developed' settings (Bines & Lei, 2011).

The national census (GoP, 1998), which last took place in 1998, recorded that 2.5 % of the population were deemed to have some form of disability and nearly 0.82 million (24.8%) of those fell within the school going age of between five and fourteen years. Whilst various governments have been supportive of the rhetoric of inclusion in recent years, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private providers have been the most active in responding to the gap in provision, by working towards the attainment of the goals for promoting inclusion in practice with a specific focus on the education of children with various special needs and/or disabilities. According to Rieser (2008, 2012), there are 51 federally funded government institutions for different disabilities, 200 provincial government institutions and 230 private sector institutions that are engaged in education provision for children with disabilities in Pakistan. From this, it is evident that private institutions are slightly more dominant in current provision than the government. No state data detail the attainment of children in these designated schools, but Rieser's initial report on Pakistan (2008) indicated that the number of children with disabilities in mainstream schools was more than 30,000 and other findings suggest that less than 1% of children so designated can be catered for in special schools (AKU-IED, 2003). To summarise, while inclusion is generally taken to refer to the rights of all children to an education, in Pakistan, this has frequently been interpreted to refer to children with disabilities

(and the meaning of this term is contested). In terms of what is provided, a small percentage of children so designated are in mainstream schools, while others attend segregated provision and overall, there is simply just not enough specialist or mainstream provision.

During my professional practice as a special educator, administrator and teacher educator in the field of special and mainstream educational needs in Pakistan spanning more than two decades, I became frustrated at the gap between the rhetoric in the policy statements and practices in the field. For my two masters degrees (1996, 2001) and some other research investigations (Azad, 2004, 2005) I explored some of these tensions and dilemmas in the field of inclusion in Pakistan. From these earlier projects, I became aware that micro-level small-scale studies can illuminate the ways in which grounded and localised interventions may challenge and change beliefs and practices. They may illuminate the ways in which changes are taking place on the ground. I do not take the utopian view that the situation will change in Pakistan as a consequence of what a small number of schools are doing, but rather that through a politics of optimism that involves exploring alternatives and engaging in research that uncovers alternatives to a culture of despair, apathy can be set aside and positive examples be produced that may in the longer term result in a wider change in practice.

The intention of my small scale exploratory study in two urban mainstream private primary schools is to elicit the values and beliefs of teachers about special needs and inclusion as well as to explore critically the nature of the various practices that have been undertaken. From my pre-understanding, I was aware that these two schools were endeavouring to cater for a variety of pupils with disabilities and special needs and hence, they would be suitable sites for my proposed investigation. Underpinning my research, is the notion that the changes in beliefs and practices taking place in these schools could be adopted by other schools, maybe at the school level or at the very least at the individual level. It could be that these sorts of small-scale developments (if they exist) can act as an exemplar for the wider changes that will need to be rooted in Pakistan's education provision, if inclusion is to become more of a reality in its schools. My motivation for carrying out this study in two mainstream private primary schools is that I

believe that in Pakistan there is the desire amongst educationalists to engage with inclusion, but because of the contextual difficulties outlined above this is hard to realise in practice. In sum, my rationale for undertaking this study in these two schools is to explore and document the practices aimed at promoting and implementing the inclusion of CWSN as well as to understand if and how these can be replicated in other mainstream schools.

### **1.3. Key terminologies used in the thesis**

In this thesis, I will be deploying a number of key terms and sometimes using them interchangeably. These include inclusion and inclusive education, children with special needs and children as well as adults with disabilities. All of these terms are contested in the extant literature and in this short section my purpose is to highlight the complexities involved, describe the ways in which some of these concepts are sometimes used interchangeably and to explain how these terms are sometimes also differently deployed in the context of Pakistan.

Starting with inclusion, this is an ‘umbrella’ term to some extent, for while it essentially means ‘supporting everyone to feel that they belong’ (Booth, 2011:11) in practice, its meaning is contested in the literature (Ainscow et al., 2006). For example, and as already argued, inclusion in education has sometimes been regarded as related to the educational needs of children deemed to have ‘special educational needs’ (SEN) (see below). Current understanding of what is meant by inclusion in education is much wider and more inclusive: it implies the rights of *all* children to participate in mainstream provision alongside their peers, being valued and respected (Hyde et al., 2014). Booth (2011), in his work on inclusion, states that in education it involves the notions of: values; equality and support; increasing participation in learning; ending discrimination; restructuring cultures, school policies and practices; viewing differences as resources for learning; acknowledging the right to a better quality of education and most importantly, recognising the fact that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society. Moreover, inclusion is a pro-active practice that involves removing any barriers that may be thwarting its implementation (Hyde et al., 2014).

As I have already explained, my study of inclusion practices in two primary schools (those practices designed to support participation, to reduce barriers to learning and to value differences as resources for learning) focuses on children who have either hidden or more visible disabilities or special needs. In undertaking this work, there are two terms that are often used interchangeably that need some discussion, these being the expressions ‘children with special needs’ (CWSN) and ‘children with disabilities’ (CWD). These terms originate from the concept of disability, which is often understood to be a physical or mental impairment or condition that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities (WHO, 1980; GoP, 2002). This interpretation highlights a person’s incapacity or limitations regarding performance in daily life and is more inclined towards the social aspect of disability. As Singal (2010) has pointed out, understandings of disability are based on the context where they originate from or where they are applied. In particular, the ‘legal, political and social discourses’ (2010:418) in the country under investigation have an impact on the ways in which disability is construed.

These early interpretations of disability as a ‘lack’ have more recently been categorised as SEN, meaning that a child has special educational needs, if he or she has a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her (TDA, 2009). There are certain complexities involved here; for just because a child has a label of ‘disability’ it does not mean that they necessarily have a learning difficulty (Grimes et al., 2012). For example, a child who is a wheelchair user may be an extremely high achiever in school. The main distinction between the two categories is that a disability may give rise to a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision, however as pointed out, not all children with a disability might have SEN. These terms are complex and contested, for example, in the literature special educational needs and disability are sometimes used interchangeably with no clear rationale for either term being given (Kiel et al., 2006). However, according to Kailes and Ender (2007), these terms are different, yet overlapping, and thus, it is important to understand the difference between the two as well as the overlap.

People with disabilities (a term commonly used in policy statements in Pakistan) have been a marginalised group when it comes to policy and implementation in the education history of Pakistan and continue to remain so (JICA, 2002). The term disability has no widely accepted interpretation in the country and how it is perceived has a lot to do with the prevailing societal attitudes (Ahuja, 2002; Peters, 2007; Miles & Singal, 2010). While there is often a distinction made between the terms disability and SEN in recent literature (Terzi, 2010), in the context of Pakistan there has been no clear division between these and they are still used interchangeably. In Pakistan, CWSN is an inclusive categorisation that refers to those with physical, emotional, behavioural, intellectual and learning difficulties, who are all grouped together. That is, disability and learning difficulties are banded together. However, with the term special educational needs there are linguistic and semantic difficulties, for it can be argued that every child is special and each has different educational needs. In the educational lexicon, 'special educational needs' (Mitchell, 2014) is a composite and contested term that often relates to a medical model of physical challenges or to notions of children with a 'lack' rather than a difference (Croft, 2010). Croft (2010) states in many national settings special educational needs frequently relates to learning difficulties, which might be temporary, as well as to more longer term challenges, such as hearing loss – a physical challenge that may have implications for learning if not recognised and ameliorated. For example, in the UK the term special educational need has a specific legal meaning (DfE, 1994), whereby it is used to identify children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it hard for them to progress with their learning at the same rate as their peers. Disability refers to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it significantly harder for them to learn or access education than most other children of their age (DfES, 2001a). This includes children with sensory impairments and complex health needs. Thus, there is some overlap and in the UK many schools and local authorities now talk of children with special educational needs and disabilities. In Pakistan, the term CWSN is commonly used to refer to children with SENs and with disabilities (GoP, 2008).

Therefore, in my study CWSN is the term that I will be using, although I realise that whatever terminology I use will have its limitations. I am also aware of the fact that while CWSN is the term most used in practice in Pakistan and by those who work in the field, some of the legislative framework and legal documentation still uses the term 'children with disabilities' in a manner that is intended to include all children with learning difficulties or disabilities that can interfere with their educational progression. I am also aware of how this interchangeable usage of the terms throughout my thesis may appear confusing to the reader, but given the lack of consistency in the literature regarding this in the Pakistani context no better solution seems to be available.

#### **1.4. Policy into practice**

While there may be a consensus in the international community about the aims of inclusion - supporting everyone and reducing barriers to effective learning - in practice, there is contestation about what this process involves. For example, there are arguments about the need for some specialist and separate provision for some children with particular needs (Sen, 2000; Florian, 2007). In order to respond to a broader perspective of inclusion, Mani (2000) has contended that multiple models of inclusion are needed according to each country's demographic and geographical diversities. That is, owing to diverse cultures, religions and socioeconomic backgrounds, this author has argued that there is a need for a variety of educational platforms to educate CWSN depending on the various geopolitical environments of each country. For example, in some national settings there is still considerable commitment towards special (separate) schools as an alternate form of education for CWSN (Sen, 2000; Singal, 2005) based on the premise that inclusion cannot be made suitable for all such children.

In terms of translating policy into practice, Hegarty and Alur (2002) and Alur and Timmons (2009) have contended that it should not be a matter of importing practices from elsewhere, for contextual relevance and experiences are key issues that need to be taken into account, if inclusion is to be embraced effectively. It is the case that some developing countries have not yet reached the point where every school has the capacity to implement inclusive education. Consequently, Katsui (2006) argued that although inclusive education is a global movement, it

requires actions to be taken at the local level to make it work and Tien (2007) stressed that what is relevant in one country or school may not work in another. Under this lens, the varying culture, policy framework, levels of resources, understanding and interpretation of the concept of inclusion are powerful reasons for developing and adopting different models.

Several factors can be identified that are obstacles to the practice of inclusion in Pakistan. First, a great deal of stigma is still attached to disability in many countries of the region, and there is a contradiction regarding how disabilities are socially and culturally perceived (Myers & Bagree, 2011). On the one hand, Islam portrays a disability as neither a curse nor a blessing from God, whereas on the other, the general societal outlook is more inclined towards it being seen as a test or punishment for the sins of the parents conveyed upon them by God (Shahzadi, 1992; Hussain et al., 2002; Bazna & Hatab, 2005). Singal et al. (2009) pointed out that the threat of stigmatisation has sometimes led to children being hidden away from society, if they have a disability or treating them as being 'normal' (itself a contestable categorisation), thus ignoring their special needs. Second, the lack of resources and expertise have been major issues in promoting inclusion in a country like Pakistan, which due to its economic position, cannot dedicate the necessary funding to support CWSN in education in ways that would be argued for in the West. Another factor is the rhetorical commitment to inclusion in various policy statements over the years that are not enacted in practice as there appears to be no strategies and procedures for implementation (GoP, 2009-10). A further systemic barrier is what is sometimes called 'education for the disabled' comes under a separate ministry and not under the Ministry of Education (WHO 2011, GoP, 2004/05). This divided ministerial responsibility clearly demonstrates an understanding among those in power that the 'disabled' need welfare or rehabilitation more than education.

In the past, in some countries of the region, including Pakistan (GoP, 1986; Singal, 2010), an understanding of disability has been dominated by a medical perspective, whereby people with disabilities were perceived to have a disease or a deficiency, which had to be cured in order for them to be like others. Armstrong (2007) and Rioux and Pinto (2010) explained that this perspective, which has

been influential in other parts of the world at different times, including Australia, the US and the UK, is largely based on the two common assumptions that: first, a high proportion of people with disabilities cannot benefit from education and second, that they are considered to be below what is called the 'normal levels' of intelligence, which leads to a more general impression of people with disabilities being uneducable as well as unemployable. To an extent, these views and perspectives are still in circulation in parts of Pakistan (Riddell, 2007).

In any case, translating inclusive policy into practice goes beyond the production of legislation and policy documents. Successful inclusion requires adequate teacher and staff training so that these professionals are prepared and supported so as to be able to work in inclusive ways. In Pakistan, there has been a lack of education for teachers and providers in inclusive practices as pre-service and in-service training for regular mainstream teachers often does not include any inclusive component or element dealing with CWSN (Florian & Rouse, 2009). Studies conducted in the country suggest that inclusion has been undertaken in an ad hoc way, whereby teachers are not uniformly trained to handle or respond to the diverse learning needs in their mainstream classrooms (Haider, 2008; Pasha, 2012). Therefore, even if CWSN are present in mainstream classrooms how their diverse needs are understood and addressed remains an underexplored issue.

People and children with disabilities in Pakistan, as in the rest of the world, have a right to education, but remain largely invisible and in the absence of reliable and accurate data, as well as adequate planning and policies to address their needs, their right to an education remains an issue that is largely unaddressed, despite some efforts having been made (UNESCO, 1999; JICA, 2002; UNICEF, 2003a; Singal et al., 2009; Croft, (2010). Katsui (2006) and Tien (2007) argue that although inclusion is now perceived as being an international movement, there are no standard rules or procedures to be followed in its implementation. The current scenario in developing countries, like Pakistan, is that frequently the challenge is to provide any kind of universal formal education at all for children including those designated as CWSN (Croft, 2010).



### **1.5. Theoretical perspectives**

In my thesis, I draw on the theoretical perspectives found in the debates around inclusion based on a human rights perspective and a whole school approach, which are both explored in this section.

Starting with the human-rights perspective, the United Nations Rights of the Child (1989), the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), the 1994 Salamanca Statement, World Education Forum Reports (UNESCO, 2000, 2006) and more recently, Education For All (UNESCO, 2011, 2012), are key international statements that recognise and endorse education as a basic fundamental right of *all* children and young people. These documents give directions for mainstream schools to make modifications in their school ethos, curriculum designs and teaching strategies in order to embrace the diversity of their learners and maximise their learning opportunities. Over the years, the human rights and social justice perspective of inclusive education has been highlighted by many in the field, for example, Ainscow (2000), Peters (2003) and Rioux (2007), Florian (2007) Booth (2011) Mittler (2013) and Hyde et al. (2014). Schools have been asked to analyse and refine their policies and practices to ensure that equal opportunities are being provided for all learners to participate and fulfil their potential. Researchers in the field of inclusive education (here with a focus on special needs) believe that by changing school practices and policies, a more inclusive system has the potential to divert the debate away from the largely discredited medical model of learning difficulties and disability towards a social model, which recognises that everyone can participate in all areas of society including education.

Avramidis et al. (2000), Sailor and Roger (2005), Ainscow (2007) and Booth (2011) contend that inclusion is about dynamically investigating and identifying ways to improve the education system so as to be able to respond effectively to the diverse learning needs of all learners. Accordingly, Carrington and Elkins (2002) state that an inclusive school is not a static enterprise, but a progressive one which has no boundaries; it is ever evolving and developing. That is, new ideas, new structures and organisation should be part and parcel of an inclusive school (Carrington & Elkins, 2002). Similarly, Udvari-Solner and Thousand

(1996, 2008) argue that the process of inclusive education should be considered from a whole school perspective, with classrooms being regarded as supportive communities, where there is a shared consensus and ethos that promotes meaningful ways for whole schools to be engaged in change through professional discourse. The point being made here is that good practice in one classroom is not sufficient; each school needs to take a holistic responsibility for embedding inclusive practices in all classrooms and in all areas of their work. My study draws on a whole school perspective, as explained by Avramidis et al. (2000), Carrington and Elkins (2002), Udvari-Solner and Thousand (2008) and Ainscow et al. (2013) in that it explores different areas of school development. That is, research into a whole school approach needs to cover, such aspects as leadership roles, the beliefs of teachers and how these link to pedagogical practices as well as how all these can interact to help schools progress towards inclusion.

#### **1.6. Aims of my research**

My main research aim is to explore inclusive practice at the primary level in two private mainstream schools in Pakistan and to identify effective practices in order to promote these more widely. In particular, the investigation has the goal of uncovering the interplay between teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practices, in relation to how the former may affect the latter. Avramidis et al. (2000), Avramidis & Norwich, (2002) and Boer et al. (2010) all claim that the educator plays the most fundamental role in ensuring the success or ineffectiveness of inclusive practices. Hence, I decided to investigate teachers' beliefs about inclusion and on the basis of these, explore the various strategies they apply in their primary classrooms to address the diverse learning needs of their pupils. The research questions that provide the focus for this research are:

- 1) What are the teachers' views of the existing policies and practices that promote inclusion in two mainstream schools in Karachi?
- 2) What are these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion?
- 3) How do these beliefs impact upon their pedagogical practices?

## **1.7. Structure of the thesis**

The contextual framing of my study is developed in Chapters 2 to 4. In Chapter 2, I present the background of my research which is the educational arena of Pakistan. The chapter starts with the demographics of Pakistan and outlines the four main parallel systems of education in the country. Moreover, it details the statistics with regards to the recorded prevalence of 'disability' and also gives a brief account of the special and inclusive approaches of education in practice in the country. The two topics of my research investigation that comprise inclusive practices and teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion, are interrelated and cannot be understood in isolation, but for the purpose of readability, the relevant literature review is divided into two chapters. Chapter 3 concentrates on current practices in the field of inclusion, examining the studies which seek to explain what is meant by inclusive practice, whereas Chapter 4 highlights what is known about teachers' beliefs regarding special needs and inclusion. More specifically, it critically explores the literature that stresses the importance of teachers' beliefs in the implementation of effective inclusive practice and the factors that influence their construction.

In Chapter 5, I explain and justify the research design and data collection methods employed in this study to explore the different teaching and learning approaches that teachers use in their classrooms. The chapter also discusses ethical issues, various constraints faced during the investigation and provides a reflexive account of the research process.

The first of the three data analysis chapters is Chapter 6, which explores the notion of school ethos as described by the 30 teacher participants in my study. Chapter 7 analyses the beliefs and values of individual teachers about special needs and inclusion as well as the impact of their personal and professional experiences on these beliefs. Chapter 8 investigates how their beliefs about special needs and inclusion have influenced their pedagogical practices as well as critically considering what teachers say about practical constraints in this matter. In Chapter 9, I bring together the various themes that have emerged from the research. I discuss my findings and draw some conclusions as well as provide recommendations for policy. I also critically review the limitations of my

research. The contributions of my thesis to the field are then discussed and suggestions regarding areas in need of further research in the field of inclusive education are put forward.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Contextualising the Study**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I contextualise my study through providing a brief overview of education in Pakistan. To start with, information about the geographical and political context is presented, which includes statistics on education in Pakistan (W.H.O & World Bank, 2011). Pakistan is characterised by a rural-urban divide, this is a crucial factor, as my study schools are located in urban areas that are more privileged and hence, better able to make progress towards inclusive practices. The chapter outlines the four parallel systems of education, briefly highlighting the role of each system in the current educational scenario. It then turns to a critical discussion of how disability is perceived in the context of Pakistan and its prevalence in the country. This is followed by a discussion on special education and the government initiatives leading to special education policies. The last section of the chapter considers inclusive education and how it is understood at the national level.

#### **2.2. Pakistan the country**

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan gained independence on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947. Its borders meet with Iran to the west, Afghanistan to the North West, India in the East, China in the North East and the Arabian Sea to the South (see figure 2.1). It has a population of nearly 190 million (World Bank, 2013), being the sixth largest in the world and covers an area of 796,095 sq. km. It is divided into four provinces: Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as the North West Frontier Province), the Northern areas, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) as well as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The country has an agricultural economy with 75% of the population living in small towns and villages. Urdu is the national language although the official language is English. Pakistan has a multicultural multi-ethnic society and hosts one of the largest refugee populations in the world. It also has the second largest Muslim population of all the world's nations (GoP, 2006).

**Figure 2.1 Map of Pakistan**



### **2.3. Educational policy context in Pakistan**

According to UNESCO:

A national education policy establishes the main goals and priorities pursued by the government in matters of education – at the sector and sub – sector level or in a given field – and the main strategies to achieve them (UNESCO, 2001:35).

However, education has never been a priority of the government of Pakistan and although policies and plans have been regularly formulated (in 1947, 1951, 1959, 1966, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1979, 1992 and 1998) none of these amounted to anything much more than political rhetoric according to researchers and commentators (Haq & Haq, 1998; Aly, 2007; Naseem, 2010). As Jalil argued: ‘while the first plan clearly recognised that economic development was a means to an end, i.e. to provide a richer and fuller life for the people, it did not recognise the economic value of education’ (Jalil, 1998: 37).

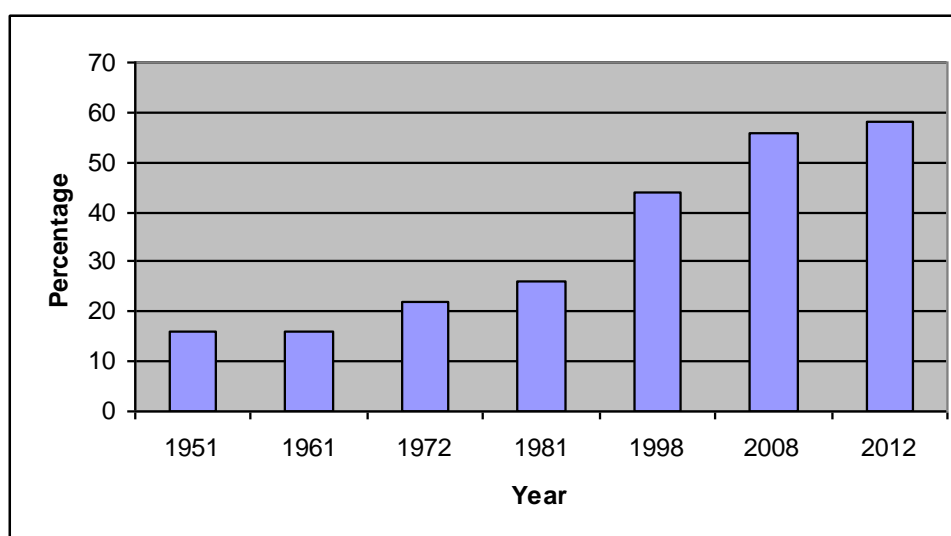
In spite of weak responses to educational provision, Pakistan has been a signatory to the Education for All (EFA) declaration; a global commitment to ensure that all children complete primary education of good quality (UNESCO, 1990). A decade later, the Millennium Declaration (UNESCO, 2000) resolved to ensure that by 2015 all children would be able to complete a course of primary education. Several measures to attain this goal were undertaken by the Government of Pakistan (GoP), significant ones being the Education Sector Reform Action (ESRA, 2001-04) and the National Plan of Action (NPA) (GoP, 2003, 2006). The ESRA (2001-04) programme sought to enact significant and sustainable improvements in Pakistan's education sector in four areas: policy and planning; professional development for educators and administrators; literacy; and public-private-community partnerships. Sustained and ongoing efforts are still needed if Pakistan is to achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goals in education of full primary completion and gender parity in enrolments in schools (World Bank, 2011).

Ball (2012:03) recognises that policy making is a 'complex' affair and its implementation is known to be problematic, in that all governments are faced with challenges during policy formulation and implementation. In the Pakistani context, Aly (2007) asserts that the various national plans for education listed above were well intentioned, but their implementation has been ineffectual. There are several causes for this implementation failure, including lack of ownership by the stakeholders, such as policy makers, educationists and parents and unrealistic goals for rolling out the initiatives in view of the lack of available resources. Moreover, many of these educational goals or policies have been borrowed from other societies, with no ownership within the state of Pakistan, often because they were not seen as contextually relevant (Aly, 2007; Naseem, 2010).

Haq and Haq's (1998) Human Development Report on South Asia and the White Paper on Education in Pakistan (Aly, 2007) provide a comparative analysis of the various five year plans the government of Pakistan has made over time aimed at increasing the educational budget. During its fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth five year plans spanning through the ten years from 1983 to 1993, the allocation of funds for education increased from 1.2% to 8.4% of public expenditure. The

literacy rate during the 1970's was 21%, which rose to 43% in 1998 and net primary enrolment rates increased from 42% to 52% in the same period (Haq & Haq, 1998). According to the Government of Pakistan's reports, the literacy rate increased to 56% in 2008 (GoP, 2007/08). Figure 2.2 highlights the progression in the literacy rate in Pakistan during the years 1951 to 2012. However, the latest data indicate only a 1% increase between 2011 and 2012, with the figure now standing at 58% (GoP, 2011-2012:138). My point here is to contextualise the educational levels of the population of Pakistan and to provide an illustration of the challenges faced in the country.

**Figure 2.2 Literacy rates for Pakistan 1951 - 2012**



Source: Government of Pakistan (GoP, 2011-2012:138)

According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2012), between 1999 and 2010 Pakistan reduced its spending on education from 2.6% to 2.3% of GNP. Only 9% cent of government spending is on education, placing Pakistan 113th amongst 120 countries on the Education Development Index (UNESCO, 2012). This is in a country that has a total of 5.1 million 'out of school' children, the second highest proportion in the world; 1 in 12 of the 'out of school' children in the world is in Pakistan (UNESCO, 2012).

In sum, while Pakistan has been a signatory to international policies to address literacy rates and to provide universal primary education, in practice there has

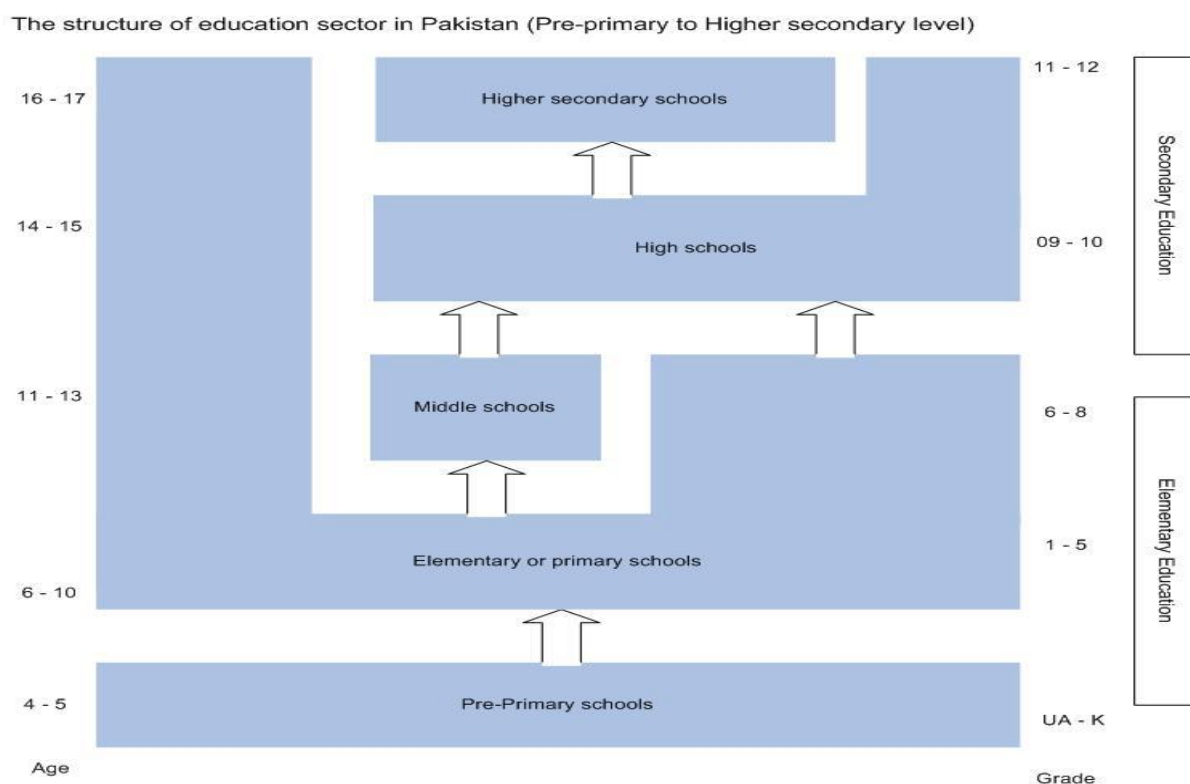


been a policy failure in these two areas. For a variety of reasons, some geopolitical (to do with regional and national instability as well as inaccessibility) and some financial (serious underfunding of education and economic pressures), Pakistan still experiences complex problems in its education provision (Naseem, 2010; Lyon & Edgar, 2010). In practice, while urban provision is generally better than rural systems, and while literacy rates are growing, there are some significant problems such that many children are still partially or fully excluded from education (UNESCO, 2012).

## 2.4. Educational provision in Pakistan

In this section I now turn to describe and explain the current pattern of education provision in Pakistan to provide further contextualisation for my study.

**Figure 2.3 Education system in Pakistan**



Source: (GoP, 2010-11:04)

As illustrated in Fig 2.3, the education system is organised into grades that include pre-primary schools up to higher secondary schools. Pakistan's schools

are divided into four parallel forms of provision as follows: state run, private, non-governmental and madrasah.

#### **a) State run school system**

The state run system includes all public schools and they follow a national syllabus starting from grade one until the tenth grade, known as matriculation. The medium of instruction is mostly Urdu and English teaching takes place during the primary grades. The teachers are appointed by the state and have secure government jobs. These schools charge minimal tuition fees and in some schools, places for those who cannot afford them, are free. There is a widespread perception that the state run system has failed the population of Pakistan (Haq & Haq, 1998; Hoodbhoy, 1998; Aly, 2007). Khan et al. (2003) have identified a range of factors that they claim have contributed to this alleged failure. There are no effective monitoring systems for the state run schools; there is also corruption in relation to the awarding of contracts; and there is a lack of accountability and sound management at all levels starting from the most junior staff right up to the top (Hoodbhoy, 1998; Naseem, 2010). The teachers in state schools have secure jobs, entitlement to membership of a provident fund (which is an amount of money to facilitate employees' future economic prospects, which they receive either when it matures or upon retirement), health schemes and pensions.

This provision has also been criticised for having overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources, poor physical conditions, high staff absenteeism as well as lack of coordination between staff and management, all of which contribute to the high dropout rates of students (Naseem, 2010). In consequence, a unique public private partnership has been set up by the CARE Foundation, a large educational NGO, and this organisation has been allowed to take over the running of more and more under-funded, failing government schools across Pakistan (CARE, 1988). What initially started as a pilot in one province has now progressed to CARE running 225 government schools, educating 160,000 students all over the country.

### **b) Private school system**

At present there are 76,674 privately run institutions compared to 194,151 run by the state (GoP, 2010-11). The public sector serves 26.63 million students while the private sector caters for 13.96 million out of a total of approximately 40 million students (GoP, 2010-11). A study conducted by Andrabi et al. (2002), examined the factors leading to the rapid growth of private schooling over the last 20 years in Pakistan. In the past, private schools usually catered for the rich in Pakistan, but nowadays many more lower income parents send their children to privately run institutions. There are two dominant types; those with a fee structure catering for the elite and other lower cost ones that provide their services to citizens in much lower income brackets (Andrabi et al., 2002; Naseem, 2010). Some of the elite private schools follow a system based on the curriculum and examinations provided by the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), the overseas school examinations department of Cambridge University for O levels (ordinary level) and A levels (advanced level) in preference to having their pupils take government exams (Andrabi et al., 2002; Naseem, 2010). Other private schools offer both arrangements, but only select the more academic students and those whose parents can afford to pay for the expensive Cambridge exams. Thus, there is a stratified and elitist provision of schooling.

Fee paying schools vary in terms of syllabi, choice of subjects, conduct of examinations, style and type of papers, reliability and credibility (GoP, 2007). Moreover, these institutions are viewed as revenue-generating schemes where the principal is usually the owner or the administrator of the school. There is often a close partnership between the teachers and the principal, where the role of the principal is that of guide, motivator and also employer. Parents are happy if their children get good results, which in turn mean robust profits for the school owners. Considerable freedom is allowed in this sector, such that the government permits schools to adjust the syllabus and curriculum according to their needs and requirements. It is widely recognised that the quality of education in both types of private institutions is far better than that in government-run public schools (Andrabi et al., 2002; Aly, 2007; Naseem, 2010).

### **c) Nongovernmental organisation (NGO) schools**

NGO schools are usually run on the basis of their mission rather than for attracting profits. That is, they are run on a 'not for profit' system, with the NGO workers and teachers usually perceived as being committed and dedicated individuals. The NGO sector has been effective in mobilising communities and prioritising service training (Khan et al., 2003). Despite there being many NGOs that deserve credit for making education available to the underprivileged, one noticeable organisation is The Citizens Foundation (TCF), which now has 1060 school units with 165,000 students, reaching 97 towns and cities across Pakistan (TCF, 2014). Based on the results of Khan et al.'s (2003) analysis of the above three systems of education, where the data sets comprised 43 institutions from each sector, the NGO provision was identified as the most successful in the country, whilst private organisations were classed as satisfactory and the state run organisations were considered poor.

### **d) Madrassah or the mosque school**

The fourth system in the overall education provision in Pakistan is the madrasah or the mosque school, which finds its origins in pre-colonial times (Mahmud, 2005). In the past, only religious studies were taught in the madaris (plural of madrasah), the main aim being to impart Islamic education. This was the main form of schooling before the start of state and private schooling for Muslims. In madaris, the main emphasis was on rote-learning of the Quran and after four or five years of recitation, most students would have learned it by heart. In recent times, these institutions in Pakistan have undergone substantial changes in terms of their structure and what they deliver. As Mahmud (2005) points out, the curriculum now encompasses not just religious subjects, but also contemporary technological sciences, such as computing. They are mostly free, with monthly stipends being given to many students and there are both day scholars and boarding pupils. These institutions are run on donations from philanthropists and various trusts with a small contribution from the state. Dars-e-Nizami (the curriculum of the religious seminaries) is taught at the madaris and the head of the madrassah is a religious leader. The recent extensions to the curriculum have led the madaris to become the fourth arm of full time education for school pupils

(Hoodbhoy, 1998; Mahmud, 2005). It has been estimated that there are more than 12,910 madaris in Pakistan imparting religious education to 1.72 million students (GoP, 2010-11).

My exploratory study based in two private primary schools in Karachi, needs to be placed within the broader context of schooling in Pakistan. I have argued that place is important; urban schools are generally better resourced and better staffed than rural schools. I have also demonstrated that there is a 'parallel' system in place where state run schools are generally less adequately provisioned than private-funded schools and fee paying is common practice amongst those attending. Nevertheless, the distinction that exists in the UK between private/state funded schooling is less pronounced in Pakistan in that many parents from a range of backgrounds strive to find the fees to get their children into private schools (Tooley et al., 2009). Thus, it can be hypothesised that urban private schools will be better placed to be inclusive; they will enjoy better resources, be more stable and have better educated staff than their state counterparts. These are all factors that need to be considered in my empirical study that lies at the centre of this thesis. These are also factors that have shaped the selection of my schools (see chapter 5).

In what follows I now want to contextualise the issue of the education of children and young people with special needs in Pakistan.

## **2.5. Special needs and disability policies in Pakistan**

People with special educational needs and disabilities have been a marginalised group when it comes to policy and practice in the education history of Pakistan and continue to remain so (JICA, 2002). As I have explained in Chapter 1, in Pakistan there has been and continues to be a blurring between the terms special educational needs and disability. Regarding which, policy documents have sometimes dealt with SENs as distinct categories, but despite this there is no widely accepted definition in Pakistan and how this matter is perceived has a lot to do with different contexts and cultures (Singal, 2010). However, two broad interpretations can be found in the national policy on special education (2002):

‘Disability means the lack of ability to perform an activity in a manner that is considered to be normal.’

‘A person with disabilities means a person who, on account of injury, disease, or congenital deformity, is handicapped in undertaking any gainful profession or employment and includes persons who are visually impaired, hearing impaired, and physically and mentally disabled.’ (GoP, 2002:17)

The first interpretation highlights the disabling condition, in which the person finds him or herself, and it is the society and the environment which determines this ‘lack’ with reference to what is seen as custom and practice that is ‘normal’. The second perspective categorises people in relation to hereditary, medical and accidental causes as forming the basis of specific disabling conditions. However, this second extract highlights three of the most prevalent conditions in Pakistan. As Singal (2010a) has pointed out, definitions of disability are based on the context they originate from or apply to, thus they depend on ‘legal, political and social discourses’ (2010a:418) in the focal country. The last national census (GoP, 1998) recorded the national disability level at 2.5 % and Table 2.1 breaks this down into the categories used in the national policy documents (GoP, 2006) of type of disability, sex and the location. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, the next National Census was to take place in 2008, but as yet this has not happened.

**Table 2.1 The percentages of population by disability, sex and area (GoP, 1998)**

Nature of disability	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Blind	7%	8%	8%	9%
Deaf and hard of hearing	7%	8%	7%	8%
Physical handicap	21%	19%	17%	14%

Severely mentally retarded	6%	6%	7%	7%
Mentally retarded	6%	8%	8%	10%
Having more than one disability	7%	9%	4%	10%
Others	44%	41%	46%	43%

Source: (GoP, 1998:01)

The policy document from which the above data has been taken is considered to be very old (GoP, 1998), but as mentioned earlier, it is used in the absence of any up to date statistics regarding disability categorisation in Pakistan. Secondly the terminologies used are mostly considered obsolete in many contexts of the world; also they are very crude and not informative regarding classification and categorisation of disabilities which is important in developing policy. Hence, the above figures can only be seen as indicative of the actual figures of disability and could also be inaccurate owing to: different understandings of what these categories entail, difficulties in reaching a diagnosis, uneven patterns of data collection and recording in rural/urban, southern/northern areas of Pakistan and also societal stigma attached to disabilities; hence, some children are not identified (Singal, et al., 2009).

People with disabilities in Pakistan, as in the rest of the world, have a right to education, but still remain largely invisible. In the absence of reliable and accurate data, adequate planning and policies to address their rights to education remain largely unaddressed, with the exception being some piecemeal efforts (UNESCO, 1999; JICA, 2002; UNICEF, 2003a; Singal et al., 2009). However, in spite of these obstacles the government and the private sector in Pakistan have developed some strategies in order to improve educational provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

### **2.5.1. Government initiatives**

In 1959, the National Commission on Education in Pakistan placed the education of what it referred to as disabled children on the government agenda for the first

time (GoP, 2007/2008). It recommended the provision of vocational education and training for children and adults with what was termed as ‘mental retardation’, as well as the training of teachers for the education of ‘children with disabilities’ (GoP, 2004/05). Prior to this government initiative, special education for children and adults with disabilities, was mainly in the hands of some NGOs and the religious madaris (UNICEF, 2003a). In 1972, the government provided some funds for special education for children with disabilities (GoP, 2006a). However, the real spur for the revitalisation of services for the disabled, the provision of facilities and the participation of people with disabilities in public activities in Pakistan, started with the United Nation’s International Year for the Disabled Persons in 1981, which was followed by the Decade of Disabled Persons (GoP, 1998). These two events were instrumental in fostering more awareness among the public. The government initiated policies and programmes and allocated resources as well as commencing legislative activity in the field. The Disabled Persons Employment and Rehabilitation Ordinance, enacted in 1981, was a key accomplishment on the part of the government, making it mandatory for all government organisations to employ a minimum of 2% of disabled persons among their staff (GoP, 1998). The ordinance also called for provision of all round welfare and rehabilitation services for the disabled, at least in policy documentation.

The Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) was established by the Government of Pakistan in 1985, specifically for the development of facilities for people with disabilities (the nomenclature of the Directorate illustrates the way in which special educational needs and disability as concepts were being used interchangeably, right at the start of the provision). Its role was to initiate policies, planning, legislation and the implementation of programmes concerning the education, training and rehabilitation of people with disabilities (PWDs) (GoP, 2004/05). The DGSE at that time was part of the Ministry of Health, Special Education and Social Welfare, with its main vision being to *‘provide by 2025, an environment for full realization of the potential of persons with disabilities through their inclusive mainstreaming’* (GoP, 2004/05:21). While this referred to physical and sensory disabilities, it also covered special educational needs, such



as learning and behavioural difficulties. To achieve this target, the main objectives/functions set out by the DGSE were to formulate a national policy for people with disabilities, establish special education centres all over the country, train specialists, provide medical services and specialised equipment, offer vocational training and to create job opportunities for people with disabilities. These objectives were to be achieved through various projects and programmes. In its initial years, the directorate's focus was mainly on providing education, but gradually, over the years, it has moved on to early detection, treatment and rehabilitation of people with disabilities (GoP, 2004/05).

These objectives were enacted through establishing different centres, initially at the federal level. The National Institute of Special Education (NISE) in Islamabad was opened in 1986 to provide seminars, workshops and training courses for teachers, parents and other personnel in the field of special education. In the same decade, the National Institute for the Handicapped (NIH) was formed being tasked with the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of those in need. The National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) for the disabled was also opened in the 1980s to provide technical and vocational training. At present, the DGSE has 59 special education centres across the country working for the betterment of services for people with specific disabilities. Moreover, the DGSE was instrumental in formulating the first Special Education Policy in 1986, which focused on the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools (GoP, 1986). The execution of this plan was supposed to be carried out by selecting mainstream schools within the catchment area of the special schools where children with disabilities were to be placed. Although well-intentioned, it was not implemented because of opposition from many of the mainstream schools, who said they were not ready for this change, mainly because of their inadequate resources for children with special educational needs and disabilities, but also owing to the lack of coordination between special and mainstream schools.

The 1986 policy for the rehabilitation of the disabled underwent revisions in 1988 when education was added as one of its key components (GoP, 1988). In the earlier policy documents, the focus regarding rehabilitation had been to take a

medical model approach, whereby disability was seen as something that needed to be rectified (Skidmore, 1996). The 1988 revised policy reflected a shift from the medical to the social model, placing emphasis on the provision of educational opportunities for the disabled. A key feature of the policy drive was to open up special education centres in the country, especially in rural areas. In addition, the policy made provision for the curriculum of the special schools to be the same as the mainstream provision.

The next National Policy for Special Education was formulated in 1998, but again was not successfully implemented mainly because of inadequate allocation of funds, the low priority given to special education and a lack of community support (GoP, 1998). The DGSE's intention to formulate a National Policy on Disabilities (it's worth noting that the terminology disability and special education are used interchangeably in the policy documents) was approved by the government in October 2002, thus providing comprehensive guidelines for future programme planning and implementation in this field. It represented a shift from special education towards a more inclusive approach for the disabled (GoP, 2002) and its main areas were early intervention, assessment and treatment, education and training under which came integration and mainstreaming, vocational training, employment, rehabilitation as well as research and development. The stated aim of the national policy for persons with disabilities is to:

Provide by 2025 an environment that would allow full realization of the persons with disabilities through their inclusive mainstreaming and providing them full support of the government, private sector and civil society (GoP, 2002:04).

A comprehensive National Plan of Action (NPA) on Education for All was formulated to implement the 2002 policy (GoP, 2006a) and it is this that is now discussed in some detail as it led to notable shifts in the policy implementation process.

### **2.5.2. National Plan of Action**

In 2006, the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) launched the National Plan of Action (NPA) to execute the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities. This was the first time in the history of Pakistan that an NPA had

been formulated drawing together suggestions from a range of stakeholders, including: people with disabilities, their parents, educationalists and policy makers in order to carry out policy implementation. Moreover, the Ministries' of Education, Social Welfare and Special Education and Health, at the federal as well as the provincial level, were involved as it was recognised by the government that access, inclusion and equalisation of opportunities could not be achieved in isolation and needed a united intervention (GoP, 2006). The proposed plans had long term and short term objectives, with specified time frames for each to be achieved. Amongst the ten short term objectives that were to be implemented by June 2009, the first was the establishment of a data bank which included statistics on causes, types and incidence of disabilities. The second objective was to produce sample surveys of people with disabilities (PWDs) in selected districts based on standardised definitions so as to provide an inventory that set out the underlying causes and extent of the disabilities. Incidence of disability was to be minimised through prevention, intervention and care as well as optimising medical rehabilitation services. Provision of vocational training, employment opportunities and legislative services were other aims of this policy. Awareness about disabilities and the promotion and advocacy of inclusive education were also key objectives. Another important goal was to increase support for NGOs working for the education and welfare of disabled children (GoP, 2006a).

The longer term objectives are supposed to be executed by July 2025 and mainly concern barrier-free access for PWD in all public, private and commercial buildings through the revision of construction bye laws. No statistics are available at the time of writing (2015) regarding how far the implementation process has been carried out for the short term objectives.

### **2.5.3. Private/NGO sector's role**

Pioneering efforts in the field of special education and to a certain extent in the field of inclusive education have come about as a result of the endeavours of the private sector and NGOs. It should be reiterated here that often NGOs fall under the category of private institutions. Major educational and rehabilitation institutions providing quality services for people with disabilities including those

categorised as being deaf, blind, mentally retarded and those with physical disabilities have been initiated and run by this sector for some time (UNICEF, 2003a). Regardless of whether they were fortunate enough to receive government support, these institutions have worked relentlessly over the years and have made a major contribution towards services for PWD. In fact, in Pakistan the bulk of the provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is handled by this sector, sometimes working with federal and provincial governments. Table 2.2 shows the number of documented state (federal & provincial) and private institutions catering for children with a range of disabilities (GoP, 2005). Although these are not completely up to date, (and obtaining up to date statistics is a challenge in Pakistan) it is still clear that, comparatively, there are more private institutions as compared to state run ones. The same report indicated that the number of children with special needs/disabilities in mainstream schools was more than 30,000 (GoP, 2005).

**Table 2.2 Number of institutions for children with disabilities**

<b>Type of Institution</b>	<b>Number of Institutions</b>
Federal government funded under DGSE institutions for different disabilities	51
Provincial government institutions for different disabilities	230
Private sector institutions for different disabilities	230

Source: (GoP, 2005)

## **2.6. Towards inclusive education in Pakistan**

So far, I have provided some contextualising details about Pakistan, its education system and its policy approach towards children with CWSN/disabilities. From what I have written, it is evident that providing inclusive education is a challenge

to policy makers and government officials in Pakistan for complex reasons. In this section, I now want to consider the steps that are being taken towards more inclusive education provision. The 1988 policy created a segregated special education system for the disabled in Pakistan. The first international documents outlining inclusion of children with special needs/disabilities was the World Declaration on Education for All (1990) emanating from a conference in Jomtein, Thailand, followed by the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000). The Government of Pakistan was a signatory, endorsing these international documents. Despite educational provision for children with special need/disabilities having limited coverage, the government of Pakistan has moved to endorse policies of inclusion. Pakistan's National Policies for People with Disabilities (1986 & 1988) had already introduced the notions of mainstreaming and integration, but the government has not always been able to implement these approaches at ground level. Subsequently, the approach of inclusive education found its way into the national policy on disabilities (GoP, 2002) in the National Plan of Action, launched in 2006, with the aim being to ensure its implementation at a future stage (GoP, 2006).

Inclusive education refers to 'the situation in which all children study in the same school, regardless of their physical, mental, social and emotional abilities or circumstances or characteristics' (AKU-IED, 2003:03). This interpretation of inclusion encompasses the key features of the Salamanca Statement, which states that all children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, have the right to study in the same environment as their peers. Inclusive education is the practice that provides school experiences to children with special needs and disabilities in mainstream schools and classrooms alongside their peers. Drawing on the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), the wish of the Government of Pakistan has been to adopt the fundamental principle of the inclusive school in which all children learn together, regardless of their abilities or differences. However, it has been recognised by educationists and researchers (Ainscow et al., 2006; Norwich, 2008; Cole, 2011; Booth, 2011) that inclusion is a complex ever evolving process, requiring continual reform in policy and practice. Its success depends on the

recruitment and training of teaching staff, the provision of support services, community involvement as well as sufficient resource allocation (UNESCO, 1994). To these ends, the Pakistan government in its earlier policies and documents made pledges to support initiatives such as teacher training, child-friendly schools, curriculum modification and liaison between special and mainstream schools (GoP, 2003 & 2006). According to government data, the orientation and training of regular school teachers in understanding the needs of children with disabilities at NISE has been implemented (GoP, 1994). Further, the curriculum of special schools has been designed in consonance with that of the regular state run schools and a uniform system of examination has been devised for all special education centres in the country (GoP, 2003). Finally, the Ministry of Education and the Directorate General of Special Education have taken steps to introduce links between the special and mainstream schools to facilitate transition between them (GoP, 2004/05). However, the government has provided no evidence that inclusive education has been embraced to any great extent across Pakistan.

Specific examples of inclusive initiatives include an early pilot project in a school in Quetta, Baluchistan, aimed at integrating children with various special needs/disabilities into the regular school environment as part of the government initiative undertaken to study the process of integration (Mirza & Hussain, 1993). However, this was not successful as the children concerned were taught in separate classes and groups and hence, the result was a form of internal segregation (Mirza & Hussain, 1993). The Provincial Education Department in Sindh, Pakistan, introduced a project of establishing small integrated units in mainstream schools, but this also failed due to the inadequate preparation of teachers (ibid). Subsequently, the Islamabad Declaration on Inclusive education was signed between the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare and Special Education (GoP, 2005). A key feature of this document was the designing of federal and provincial policies, conducive to the process of inclusion of people with special educational or special needs / disabilities in public life and also for the promotion and reinforcement of inclusive education. It further called for a coordinated mechanism to be set up between the federal and provincial ministries

involved in working for people with special educational or special needs / disabilities. The declaration also called for barrier-free access to all public, private and commercial buildings as well as seeking to incorporate inclusive education into all laws, policies and plans related to education, health and so on.

A follow up to this declaration took place at the Conference on Inclusive Education in 2007, where a pilot project was launched to promote inclusion, involving 10 schools from rural and urban areas in Islamabad (the capital territory as selected by the Federal Directorate of Education) (Rieser, 2008). The project was supported by international organisations, such as IDP Norway and Sight Savers International, now having been expanded to include 16 more schools. Government findings on the project are not available, but Rieser (2008, 2012) has identified some success stories from this provision, writing that teachers from the pilot schools identified hundreds of out of school children with special educational or special needs/disabilities by going out in the community. The majority of these children had either never been enrolled in any school or had dropped out at some point. Amidst parents' fears of their children being bullied, embarrassed or sometimes even the idea of their being taken away from begging on the streets, the majority of them were convinced to send them to school and as a result most are now enrolled in schools with their social, emotional and academic needs being more effectively addressed.

In 2009, the National Education Policy committed Pakistan to the following goals:

To achieve the commitments of the government of Pakistan towards Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), inclusive and child friendly education will be promoted.

Special measures shall be adopted to ensure inclusion of special persons (sic) in mainstream education as well as in literacy and technical and vocational education (TVE) programmes' (GoP, 2009:19).

However, although these statements appear in policy texts, there are still no clear strategies and procedures for implementation. While the government has been battling with the policies and procedures, the private/NGO sector, on the other

hand, has been working towards promoting inclusion in practice in spite of a lack of support.

## **2.7. Summary and conclusion**

The Pakistani government has declared itself a signatory to all the major international and global initiatives concerning special needs / disabilities and has shown some commitment and willingness to move forwards in practical ways, which has happened in some parts of the country. However, in spite of good intentions, implementation has not been without obstacles, mainly regarding resourcing and coordination between different government departments. Further, disparity between the types of schools is an additional factor causing some inequity of provision that undermines the human rights perspective.

What the discussion in this chapter has revealed is that in the context of Pakistan there is a disjuncture between policy texts and policy enactments. Policies speak of ameliorating special needs/disabilities yet often focus on a medical model to categorise children. Recently, a discourse of inclusion has been deployed by various government departments in their policy documentation. On the ground, a range of provision including segregated and special schooling; withdrawal of children in mainstream schools as well as some more inclusive approaches mainly in private schools and those run by NGOs, can be observed. Thus, in practice, provision for children with special needs / disabilities around the inclusion discourse has to date been largely down to local initiatives rather than government policy. The slow pace of the government in taking up the inclusion agenda can be partially attributed to the lack of useful statistics on the special/needs disabilities and the lack of consensus on what these terms mean.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Inclusive Practices**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I explore what is involved in inclusive practices. According to Ainscow (1994a, 1995) and Ainscow et al. (1994), the aim of inclusive education is to restructure schools so that all children are able to participate in the learning process. Similarly, Tummons (2010:6) contended that inclusive practice involves the provision of teaching and learning in ways that make these processes accessible for all students. Petty (2004) viewed inclusion as involving the adaptation and accommodation of learning resources and strategies delivered in the classroom to suit the different learning needs of all learners. Likewise, Ingleby et al. (2011) argued that inclusive practices should comprise a variety of ways and techniques to deliver the curriculum in the classroom in order to make it accessible for all learners. The fundamental point is that inclusive education is about meeting diverse needs in classrooms to ensure that all children are enabled to work, learn and grow together in a climate of support and respect, where everyone is welcomed as a full member of the learning community.

In this chapter, I explore the strategies, ideas and techniques contained in the mainstream literature that are arguably useful in promoting inclusion. I emphasise the role of school leaders in the enterprise, the need to differentiate the curriculum, apply appropriate teaching styles and strategies, offer levels of collaboration across the school, provide professional development opportunities as well as work effectively with parents. I have entitled this chapter 'Inclusive Practices' and it is important to restate how I will be responding to this concept. Inclusion is a multi-dimensional phenomenon (see chapter 1) that overlaps to some extent with the related concept of diversity. The core concern is to value, respect and meet the needs of all sorts of differences, which can include culture and beliefs, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic status as well as race/ethnicity and those differences that can make learning harder for some children than for their peers. The point is to provide an environment where everyone can fulfil their potential. However, while I recognise that inclusion has this broader

agenda, in my study I am specifically focussing on children with special needs (as so designated in Pakistan - see chapter 1).

### **3.2. The role of school leadership in promoting inclusion**

Researchers argue that inclusive education calls for modifications in all aspects of the curriculum, assessments and all instructional practice. Thus, inclusive schools need to be led by those who understand what is involved and who have a commitment to inclusion and inclusive praxis (O'Brien et al., 1989; Porter, 1991; Skrtic, 1995; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997). Inclusive schools are places where the staff collaborate in order to offer a comprehensive programme for all learners and are willingness to modify the whole school programme and underpinning culture, if this needs to happen in order to support the diverse learning needs of the children. A positive school ethos is often attributed to the way in which the leadership of a school forms relationships with the staff (Harris, 2001). Corbett (1999) advocated that an inclusive school ethos and a school seeking to embrace a diverse body of learners should try to preserve and extend a body of values of respect and acceptance of all children.

Zollers et al. (1999) found that effective school leadership played a key role in transforming the school culture through providing a democratic, value driven role model approach. That is, they found that a democratic approach by the school principal helped to create an environment which made teachers feel a part of the decision-making and consultation process. If a school culture is empowering and democratic, then staff have the opportunity to become contributing members and thus share the responsibility for making the whole inclusion process successful. According to Sergiovanni (1994), a successful principal leads in relation to values and beliefs. Bennathan's (1996) study also found strong leadership and a positive school ethos as being instrumental in a school moving towards being more of an inclusive institution. My argument here is that inclusion cannot be an individualised practice in one teacher's classroom, but rather, it has to be part of a whole-school approach that is led and owned by the school leadership team and the staff. Inclusion in schools is not just an attitude or ethos, for it has to be enacted. There is a distinction then between those values that are espoused and those that are then enacted; thus, the inclusive school will have a set of techniques

and strategies that support its inclusive work. I start by exploring the arguments for and against having a differentiated curriculum in inclusive provision.

### **3.3. Differentiating the curriculum**

Foreman (1996) has argued that, often, the mainstream curriculum in schools acts as a limit to the inclusion of CWSN. Consequently, meeting the needs of a diverse intake of students requires that schools modify the curriculum as well as their teaching pedagogies (Gross, 1993; Lewis, 1995; Foreman, 1996; Kyriacou, 1997; Coutinho & Repp, 1999). Westwood & Graham (2000:05) proposed ‘differentiation’ in order to support successful inclusion in mainstream classrooms, which they explained as referring to a differentiated designed curriculum and teaching techniques, thus taking into account the need to enhance student learning and progression according to their varying abilities. Hence, in this section, I take curriculum to refer to the content as well as the pedagogy, methods, assessment and the classroom organisation, i.e. everything that happens inside the classroom and inside the school.

According to Qualter (1996), differentiation is concerned with using and applying a diverse set of teaching strategies, methods of assessment, different modes of classroom organisation as well as sensitive and reflexive teacher student interactions in order to promote successful inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Tomlinson (1996), Minke et al. (1996), Scott et al. (1998) and Lo et al. (2000) have concurred that differentiation encompasses the content, the processes and products of each lesson. They also proposed that inclusion should take into account classroom organisation, modes of assessment and peer support. Teachers need to be able to deploy a variety of techniques and strategies to deliver the curriculum content so as to support learning and participation in their classrooms (Tomlinson, 1996; Lo et al., 2000). Further, reflecting on the implementation of the lesson, taking into account what went according to plan and what did not, can help teachers in extending and redirecting their own teaching, according to Morley (2006).

Tomlinson (1996) and Lo et al. (2000) outlined four different aspects related to managing the curriculum content: first, some students need to cover less lesson

material than others, second, some need to be provided with extended opportunities, third, the nature of learning tasks can vary from simple to complex and last, the modification of resource materials is often necessary in order to cater for diversity and promote inclusion. Poonam and Belfiore (1996) proposed a watered down curriculum, requiring less time, less effort and less complexity, as more relevant for CWSN to attain academic goals. However, Stanovich (1986) criticized the idea of offering less to these children as this approach carries the risk of widening the learning gap between those with and those without learning difficulties, thereby compromising social justice and equity. These sorts of reservations were also expressed in various studies undertaken by Burton (1992), Hart (1992), Reynolds and Farrell (1996), Wang (1998) and Brown (1999), who argued that modifications of curricula that merely 'water down' content, could affect the quality of the instruction received by CWSN. Indeed, a study by Klinger and Vaughn (1999) reported that CWSN, especially older ones, disliked being given easier tasks than their peers. They found that many wanted the same kind of instruction and activities that their peers were being offered. Similar observations were reported by Read (1998), who found that CWSN disliked having differentiated assignments compared with those of their peers, whether they have a disability or not. What they did enjoy and value were open assignments that involved a range of responses as compared to closed tasks where only one option was available (Read, 1998).

Ainscow (2000b) pointed out the danger of having lower achievement expectations of CWSN through engaging in differentiation strategies, which could potentially limit their performance in school. Hehir and Katzman (2012) reiterated this concern and emphasised that schools, when applying a differentiated curriculum strategy, needed to be conscious of not deliberately lowering their expectations of CWSN. Moreover, they proposed that a differentiated curriculum is best supported by other collaborative measures, such as high expectations of all students from school leaders, instructional practices covering academic issues as well as behaviour and an on-going professional development programme to support teachers. Finally, they called for a high level of personal responsibility and collective accountability from the leadership as

well as the staff in providing an effective on-going inclusive programme (Hehir & Katzman, 2012).

Strategies to promote inclusion proposed by Ainscow (2000b) and Westwood (2001) cover matters such as language adaptation in terms of oral instruction, involving adjusting modes of questioning, work monitoring, individualised work sheets, effective time allocation, group/individual work, cooperative learning and peer support. In addition, they claimed that informal monitoring and assessment of students helps teachers to make appropriate adaptations to their lessons so as to cater effectively for the diverse learning needs of their students (Ainscow and Brown, 1999; Ainscow, 2000b). Several studies (Wang, 1992; Fuchs and Fuchs, 1998; Ayers, 1999; Kwong, 2000; Lo et al., 2000) have found that teachers making such changes see this as an uphill task when faced with practical implementation in their classroom situations, even if they believed in their desirability; a dissonance between espoused and enacted values. On the other hand, Leyser and Ben-Yehuda (1999) and Kwong (2000) in their studies reported that experienced teachers saw modification of instructions as an effective way of helping their students to grasp what they were being tasked to do. Similarly, Deschneis et al. (1999) observed that such strategies were relatively easy for teachers to enact and did not take much extra time or planning, i.e. such small modifications are viewed as more doable than taking giant leaps. In general, it is widely accepted in the literature on change that teachers in schools adopting inclusion need to have flexibility in their practice, if they are to address diversity effectively (DfES, 2004; MacBeath et al., 2006).

Johnson and Johnson (1999), Ainscow (2000b) and Westwood (2001) have all argued that cooperative learning is a useful strategy that can be used by teachers so as to move away from individual labelling and/or competitive efforts towards group endeavours. Johnson and Johnson (1999) divided co-operative learning into five component parts: 1) positive interdependence 2) individual accountability 3) face to face interaction 4) social skills and 5) group processing. For them, the underlying principle of these elements is that each student benefits as there are shared goals for achievement. For example, each group member is accountable for her/his performance, which results in more interaction between the group

through assistance, discussion, feedback and encouragement. They also deemed it important for members of a cooperative group to be trained in and taught interpersonal and group skills. Further, evaluation and analysis of the workings of the group as to what is helpful and what needs to be eliminated is an effective way for members of the group to problem-solve and maintain the effectiveness of group learning.

Lindsley (1992) and Wang (1998), however, argued that a cooperative style of learning as a form of working is not always compatible with classroom instruction as it can slow the rate of learning and can lower expectations of CWSN in the group. In particular, their investigation found that cooperative learning is not always the most useful method for some learners who need to be monitored and cannot easily work independently. The structure of the cooperative learning group, posited Stearns (1999) and Calderon (1999), is a factor that needs to be taken into account as simply seating students together and calling them a cooperative learning group is insufficient. However, if the group are working together towards a common goal through cooperative learning, this can promote greater achievement than when working alone (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Hargreaves, 1997; Arnold & Stevenson, 1998). More specifically, higher levels of reasoning, new ideas and transfer of learning from the individual to the group as well as from one situation to another are seen as some of the benefits of cooperative learning, according to Calderon (1999) along with helping to reduce disruptive behaviour (Hargreaves, 1997). Furthermore, working in a cooperative learning group can be a source of better psychological health, elevate self-esteem and encourage the value of cooperation as compared to working independently or being in competition with peers (Bruner, 1972; Johnson and Johnson, 1987a; Johnson et al., 1990). In addition, cooperative learning can strengthen the support system amongst class members, thus allowing the teacher more time to address individual needs (Hart, 1992). Finally, having learning centres within the classroom to support cooperative learning and following an activity based approach during lessons are also beneficial techniques that involve all learners in the classroom (Westwood, 1997). However, this will only work if any CWSN are adequately challenged and encouraged to make progress.

### **3.4. Teaching styles and strategies**

Turning now to teaching styles and teaching strategies that promote inclusive education, Read (1998) pointed out that, generally, teachers acknowledge being comfortable with one teaching style, but one of the major requirements for inclusion, according to Marvin (1998), is for teachers to be equipped with a range of teaching strategies to meet various learning styles and to have the ability to deploy these effectively so as to ensure learning access for all students. In Ainscow et al.'s (1994, 2006) investigations into urban schools, teachers were given the opportunity to reflect on their styles of teaching and the focus was on developing their understanding of how their students learn. As a result, not only did the teachers respond positively to suggestions that they incorporated group work and problem solving into their lessons, but also they came to recognise that CWSN could achieve more than they had previously thought. Likewise, Florian (2008) contended that it would be better if teachers, rather than focussing on the differences, concentrated more on strategies to promote successful learning outcomes.

Read (1998) found that effective teachers, that is effective for a wide range of children, promote a variety of learning strategies and adjust their teaching style so as to take into account pupil learning preferences without compromising the lesson content. Moreover, his study found that effective teachers preferred activity-based lessons, giving a choice of oral and written presentations, reformatting of texts and figures, and providing a balance between individual and group work, which is consistent with the findings of Hammond & Read, 1992; Marvin, 1998. However, Hammond and Read (1992) argued that CWSN may benefit more from an individualised format of teaching, although it has been argued elsewhere (Alexander, 1992; Moyles, 1992) that this mode of teaching is difficult to organise in a mainstream classroom of some 30 students or more. Marvin (1998) discussed the approach of individual teaching in a small group, where students can be paired, and one can act as a model for the other. In relation to this approach, there is some evidence to suggest that working in small groups is beneficial to learning and hence, is a useful tool in inclusive classrooms (Galton & Williamson, 1992; Ainscow, 1995). Moreover, a tendency for teachers to break

down tasks into smaller steps for all, thus enabling all learners and especially CWSN to be able to cope and complete classroom tasks has been identified as a positive strategy by Ainscow and Tweddle (1988) and Norwich (1994b). Crucially, Ainscow (2000b) emphasised the effectiveness of teachers sharing and discussing their pedagogic approaches with all those staff involved in developing inclusive practice across the whole school, to which I now turn.

### **3.5. Collaboration across the school**

According to Ainscow et al. (1994), Ainscow (1997) and Ballard (1995) collaborative decision-making and planning are important practices in moving a school towards becoming more inclusive. Decisions concerning what is to be taught and how the teaching is to be delivered need to be decided amongst the leadership and teaching staff. Udvari-Solner and Thousand (1996) stressed the various benefits of collaborating and working in teams, especially the sharing of leadership functions and exchanging ideas aimed at enhancing teaching skills so as to address more effectively the diverse learning needs of pupils. Similar examples of helpful cooperation through team work were found by Ainscow (2000b) in his investigation into urban schools cited earlier, where a shared commitment and knowledge of roles and responsibilities helped the teachers plan and successfully implement learning activities in their classrooms. Team teaching was another effective inclusion strategy, where special educators and mainstream classroom teachers shared in the teaching of lessons, hence benefiting all learners in their classrooms (Zollers et al., 1999). Fletcher–Campbell’s (1994a:1994b) investigations identified active interaction between the staff and students of special and mainstream schools as creating a rich collaboration between the two forms of institutions.

Collaboration amongst the teaching as well as the support staff often minimises the problems of learning difficulties and the complexities involved in the curriculum (Hunt & Goetz, 1997) as well as bringing new perspectives to thinking and practice. The successful use of support staff, such as teaching assistants, where well planned and coordinated, Welding (1996) claimed, can facilitate curriculum access for pupils and also develop their confidence. In this regard, Farrell’s (1997) study that examined the role played by support staff in



fostering social relationships between CWSN and their peers, found that teaching assistants were able to support and facilitate positive relationships between classmates, if they joined in group work and various social activities taking place outside the classrooms. In fact, he noted that in such cases the skills of the support staff were of prime importance. Ainscow (2000b) welcomed the idea of having support staff or teaching assistants for CWSN, but expressed reservations regarding their skills and role in facilitating learning. Consequently, he stressed the importance of teaching assistants being trained in the right skills to support learning and for schools to evaluate the best ways of using them effectively. Moreover, he elicited some evidence that teachers, instead of interacting with CWSN directly, preferred to do this via the teaching assistants, thus minimised their own communications with the students. Ainscow (2000) asserted that there is the need for a balance between dependency on the support staff by the teacher as well as by CWSN. Exchange of roles between the teachers and teaching assistants was another effective way of handling support in the classroom found by Ainscow and Brown (1999), as in such cases, both contributed and facilitated maximum learning in the classroom. Moreover, Balshaw (1999) wrote that a school policy that develops the assistant's role in facilitating learning can minimise any problems associated with such participation in the mainstream classroom. Balshaw also advocated that teachers and assistants should be analysing existing practices collaboratively as this is a useful way of developing the teaching assistant's skill base for maximising the learning opportunities for CWSN. However, it does need to be pointed out that the provision of teaching assistants does not generally occur in Pakistan's classrooms. Collaboration is more likely to occur between teams of teachers.

### **3.6. Teacher education and professional development**

Much research suggests that both general and special education teachers often feel inadequately trained to cater for CWSN in mainstream classrooms (Schumm & Vaughn, 1991; Houck & Rogers, 1994; Lieber et al., 2000 & Burstein et al., 2004). Many teacher respondents in these studies reported that they did not have sufficient skills, knowledge and training to meet the diverse learning needs of CWSN. In order to boost their competence and confidence, teachers need training

and support that prepare them for making the best provision for CWSN (Florian, 2008; Mittler, 2012). Mittler (2012) expressed the view that such training should be designed to support teachers on a continual basis in planning and developing a range of appropriate teaching and learning tasks so as to address the differences in their mainstream classrooms. Similarly, Wenitzky et al. (1992) supported the practice of staff development as ongoing and participatory, involving the initiation of sustainable collaboration and partnerships between colleagues. Likewise, Tilstone et al. (1998) highlighted the importance of teacher training and support in implementing change to meet the needs of students in their classrooms. Jager (2013) added that continuous professional development helps to address the apprehensions teachers can face in ensuring that they meet the needs of CWSN. Williams (2007) described teacher education and training as an important feature of school development, whilst pursuing the inclusion goal.

Ainscow (1994b, 1995a) argued that in order for staff development to have an effective impact on thinking and practice, it needs to be closely associated with school development. The benefits of this exercise, he wrote, are visible in the shape of more knowledgeable, better equipped and empowered staff willing to try out new strategies. That is, well prepared teachers, he emphasised, are the catalysts for bringing in innovative perspectives to teaching and learning, hence aiding in the implementation of inclusive practices. In the light of this claim, Ainscow, (1997:07) argued for the development of 'schools for all' as a basic feature of teacher education, where collaborative exchanges between students, teachers and parents are promoted, for such collaboration can play an effective role in the progression of schools to become places where diversities in learning are recognised and accepted (Ainscow, 1994b, 1995, 2005). Research evidence (Conaster et al., 2000; Martinez , 2003) further suggests that teachers who undertake courses and training geared towards supporting CWSN have a more positive attitude towards inclusion than those who have not had such an opportunity . However, at this point it needs to be remembered that what is being advocated here comes from western-set research studies and refers to provision in where teacher education could have a more inclusive view of diversity than in Pakistan.

The training of effective teachers for inclusive practice is predicated on their having time and space to reflect as part of their on-going learning. The analysis of existing practice can be carried out through observation, thus enabling teachers to identify certain aspects of their pedagogy that could be modified so as to lower barriers to learning. In this regard, Ainscow (2000b) encouraged teacher partnerships, where they observe each other and are given opportunities for peer coaching. Such exercises, he pointed out, can create stimulus and motivation for professional development. Moreover, failure in aspects of teaching can prove a useful focus for analysing and reflecting on how to improve practice (Morley, 2006) as well as provide a medium for driving the direction and development of teaching pedagogy.

### **3.7. Partnerships with parents and partnerships with learners**

Schools cannot develop or improve their inclusive practice on their own and, especially where CWSN are concerned, can benefit from a strong home and school partnership (Comer, 1987). Schools are intimately linked to children's parents in that parental advocacy has been a key driving force behind the pursuit of options for inclusion for CWSN in the western hemisphere (Comer, 1987; Board of education vs Holland, 1992; Erwin & Soodak, 1995; Ryndak et al., 1995). On a positive note in this regard, the parents in Erwin and Soodak's (1995) investigation experienced a sense of belonging, understood the justice of inclusion and experienced the freedom of choice of educational placement for their children. That is, they reported that their advocacy role had transformed them as individuals and also made them aware of their strengths in supporting their children. Similarly, parents in York-Barr et al.'s (1996) research were identified as key participants in promoting effective educational choices for CWSN, for being viewed as an equal members of the school community resulted in their feelings of being valued and respected (Zollers et al., 1999). This led to parental empowerment and the active involvement in their children's academic and social achievements. Moreover, parental and family involvement reaped positive results in terms of students' performance as well as having an impact on their attitudes towards their school as they could clearly see that there was a circle of adults who cared for them (Zollers et al., 1999).

Hunt and Goetz' (1997) studies considered the willingness of parents to be key a part of the systemic change towards inclusive options for CWSN. Regarding this, Squires and Kranyik (1996) ("Board of education Sacramento City Unified School District v Holland,") stressed the importance of parental as well as community involvement in the process of education as part of an evolving collaboration between the staff, parents, children and other members of the community. The parental stance was seen as instrumental in the shift towards inclusion in Burstein et al.'s study (2004), in which they campaigned for their children to be included in mainstream classes. In Gunter's research (2006:65), close relationships were observed between the school and the families of CWSN, with the development of honest interactions, and the taking up of a 'can do' approach to learning.

Rose (2000) and many other researchers have asserted that the goal of inclusion is about recognising the rights of all pupils to participate fully in all aspects of their education, thereby preparing them for life as independent adults. Thus, partnerships involving learners are critical in promoting inclusion. There are, however, some studies that report the concerns of some teachers about involving pupils, which have found that some teachers adopt an authoritarian role so as to avoid challenges by CWSN to their authority and hence, disturbing the regular routine of their classrooms (Wade & Moore, 1994; Cowie, 1994; Charlton, 1996). Pupils' alleged inability to make choices, to consult, calculate and to communicate, were some of the obstacles cited by teachers for not involving their pupils in their own learning and assessment procedures (Rose et al., 1996a). Consequently, according to Rose (2000), some teachers and students need to acquire negotiation skills in order to be able to engage in a dialogue about learning and assessment as this is likely to result in improved outcomes.

Other studies have indicated the potential benefits of including students as fully as possible in their own learning. For example, Griffith and Davies' work (1995) revealed evidence of improved pupil self-esteem, increased concentration on tasks and a more responsible attitude towards school work, when they were encouraged to play an active role in decision-making. Students' greater involvement in their goal setting also helped them to reflect upon their practices and enabled them to

discuss their learning outcomes with their teachers in a way that led to improved performance (Griffith and Davies, 1995). Their investigation also recognised that some CWSN were less able to express themselves adequately and needed assistance through questions and cues so as to be able to analyse their learning. Flutter and Ruddock (2004:07) found in their research consulting pupils about their learning that: 'Pupils of all ages can show a remarkable capacity to discuss their learning in a considered and insightful way, although they may not always be able to articulate their ideas in the formal language of education.' Moreover, pupils' views and their participation in their learning proved to be a powerful tool in overcoming negative attitudes towards schooling and learning (Ghaill, 1992a, 1992b; Padeliadu, 1995, 1996). Similar evidence was provided by Bennathan's (1996) work, which reported improved motivation and participation as well as a reduction in behaviour issues when learners were engaged in a learning dialogue. He further asserted that teachers working in isolation are unable to create an impact, whereas those who worked in schools with an ethos that supports student involvement and participation in their learning programme have considerably more success. Child-to-child partnership is another strategy some schools employ successfully where they act as a resource for their peers (Ainscow, 2000b).

### **3.8. Summary and conclusion**

In this chapter, it has been argued that if inclusion is to become established in schools, then a whole school approach needs to be taken. Moreover, there is evidence that some strategies and techniques can effectively promote inclusive practices. This is particularly the case when school leaders create time and space for cooperation along with professional development as well as when they champion special education curriculum planning and delivery. Further, parental support is crucial in supporting the learning and well-being of CWSN and there is a view that the pupils themselves need to be fully involved with decisions about their learning, although this is still contested by some. The research also indicates that developing inclusive practices is not without its difficulties (Kavale & Forness, 2000). For instance, a major barrier has been the unpreparedness of mainstream teachers to address the needs of CWSN, mainly owing to time

restraints (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Manset & Semmel, 1997; Tapasak & Walter-Thomas, 1999).

In this chapter I have explored what is meant by inclusion in its widest sense while focusing more specifically on the inclusion of CWSN. I have identified some major elements that go towards the production of inclusion in schools, in particular, the need for differentiation in the curriculum of a form that does not involve dilution. I have also presented literature that highlighted how some strategies seem to be more aligned with inclusive pedagogy than others. I have also provided evidence in the extant research that parental and child involvement in learning can promote effective forms of inclusion. However, there are some limitations regarding the literature reviewed in this chapter. First, some of the research that I have reviewed is quite old, although I would argue that these older findings are still of value. For example, Ainscow's work on the power of collaboration in supporting inclusion is longstanding and still quite valid. Perhaps the main limitation is that much of the research that I have cited has had to be drawn from work undertaken in western settings where teacher education, in-school provision as well as legal and educational commitments towards meeting the needs of CWSN are much better established. In response to this particular 'limitation', I would argue that it is useful to start to establish some understanding of what inclusion means in theory and in practice in order to undertake my empirical work, regarding which the realities of the setting in Karachi primary schools will also need to be factored in.

In conclusion, Cooper (1996) identified responsiveness to individual needs, flexible assessment techniques, student and parental involvement and open communication, as being key elements of an inclusive school ethos. According to Ainscow (1994b, 1995), on-going review and enquiry can provide a way for schools to sustain momentum as well as to monitor the changes in their practices in relation to inclusion. Moreover, teachers' beliefs and values are crucial to the ways in which they understand and deal with special needs in their mainstream classrooms and consequently, the literature regarding this is reviewed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Teachers' Beliefs about Special Needs and Inclusion**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This review relates to the second research question of my study that aims to investigate the beliefs of teachers and special needs educators towards special needs and their inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Drawing on the rather small body of research and investigations conducted on these beliefs the aim is to explore their orientation towards special needs and inclusive education. I examine how these are shaped and seek to identify the factors that influence the development and construction of these beliefs and hence how they respond when faced with inclusion challenges. That is, these perceptions, it is posited, determine the level of expectation, which in turn has an impact on the way CWSN are provided for and the degree to which they are challenged in their learning by teachers. There are a great many influencing factors that come into play in this respect that include teachers' perception and understanding of disability, their experiences with CWSN and the provision of support and training. Moreover, from the previous chapter it can be seen that a critical factor is strong leadership in developing a whole school ethos of developing inclusive practice and encouragement for teachers in building confidence and competence. Where these are present, the indications are that teachers can change their beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion and develop an enabling self-belief.

#### **4.2 Importance of teachers' beliefs and attitudes <sup>1</sup>**

Beliefs, according to Mansour (2009), can be taken as concepts difficult to define. Although they have found their place in investigations, in the past researchers, such as Eisenhart et al. (1988), have suggested the difficulties encountered in defining beliefs and belief systems and the inconsistency of definitions could be explained by the agendas of researchers and research studies. Pajares (1992) contended that beliefs are studied in diverse fields, resulting in a variety of

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<sup>1</sup> Pajares (1992) suggested beliefs are a 'messy construct' and can be attributed to other concepts such as 'perceptions, conceptions, orientations and attitudes', whereas Tabachnik and Zeichner (1984) argued that the outer manifestation of beliefs can be taken as attitudes. During the course of this thesis the concepts or the terms beliefs and attitudes will be used interchangeably.

meanings and educational research, hence educational research has been unable to adopt a standard working definition. He termed it as a 'global construct' (1992:308) difficult to be empirically investigated. Earlier, Abelson (1979) defined beliefs in terms of people manipulating knowledge under a specific circumstance or a purpose. Brown and Cooney (1982) defined beliefs as dispositions to action influencing behaviour patterns. After reviewing the definitions of anthropologists, social psychologists and philosophers, Richardson (1996:103) noted that, 'there is considerable congruence of definition among these three disciplines in that beliefs are thought of as psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true'.

Researchers (Pajares, 1992; Thompson, 1992; Aguirre & Speer, 2000; Standen, 2002; Mansour, 2009) have identified several aspects of beliefs which make them complex to define having certain distinct qualities: they are deeply embedded and are difficult to change, their understanding is based on the individual or have individuality, often are personal assumptions, they can be true or false and commonly entail a judgmental approach. However complex, these writers suggest teachers' views and beliefs shape their understanding and thought processes about their teaching and learning. Moreover, teachers' beliefs and their practices are important for understanding and improving educational processes (OECD, 2009).

Furthermore, Pajares (1992) and Savasci-Acikalin (2009) wrote that beliefs have often been used interchangeably with attitudes and knowledge. These writers argued that distinguishing knowledge from beliefs is a daunting task. Savasci-Acikalin (2009) contended that beliefs can have an ideological aspect not necessarily based on truth, whereas knowledge which refers to factual information, has a truth base and leads to skilful action. A further distinction between beliefs and knowledge has been provided by Mansour (2009:27), who said, 'while knowledge often changes, beliefs are static, whereas knowledge can be evaluated or judged, such is not the case with beliefs'. Beliefs as suggested by these researchers do not necessarily follow the condition of truth and unlike knowledge they are usually deeply embedded with minimal chances of changing. Yero (2002) pointed out that often statements about educational environments



published in educational literature find their basis in beliefs rather than factual knowledge.

However difficult the distinction between teachers' beliefs and knowledge, Thompson (1992) stressed the need for this to be understood by teachers and researchers since the former often treat their beliefs as knowledge. However, Mansour (2005a) suggested beliefs and knowledge are interdependent as often beliefs control the gaining of knowledge, but the latter also influences the former. Similarly, Zembylas (2005) argument is that teachers' beliefs are a component of their knowledge and just as having an insight into their beliefs being needed so too is comprehension of their knowledge required for understanding teaching pedagogies. According to Pajares (1992), teachers' beliefs influence and play a fundamental role in their knowledge acquisition and interpretation about their teaching practices.

Several studies over the years have examined the link between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices (Pajares, 1992; Thompson, 1992; Yero, 2002). Findings from some suggest teaching practices are strongly associated with teachers' beliefs (Pajares, 1992, Haney et al., 1996; Levitt, 2002; Aguirre & Speer, 2002; Lefebvre et al., 2006), while others have found these do not necessarily have an impact on their classroom practices (Mellado, 1998; Lederman, 1999; Hancock & Gallard, 2004). These works have indicated that teachers' beliefs are context and content specific. That is, they are shaped according to the place and situation they are being applied to. Aguirre and Speer (2002) gave details of how teachers' beliefs inform practice in their classrooms. They posited that a collection of beliefs leads teachers towards the formulation of goals which influence their actions during their classroom activities. Furthermore, teachers' beliefs, asserted Nespor (1987) and Pajares (1992), play an instrumental role in their decision making about curriculum and instructional tasks. There is an inconclusive debate about the relationship between teachers' beliefs in the academic literature. However, many scholars agree that the implementation of any school reform movement is heavily dependent on the teachers (Pajares, 1992; Tobin et al., 1994; Levitt, 2002).

Teachers' beliefs, researchers suggest, can be classified under various categories, which are interlinked and often become difficult to study in isolation. However, research indicates they fall into three main categories:

**Personal beliefs:** these are beliefs about the self and the social world (Fives & Buehl, 2008). Rath (2001) suggested such beliefs find their basis from personal experience as a learner. Pajares (1992) wrote that the forming of such beliefs could be due to one incident or event that is intense in the memory or a series of events. Rokeach (1986) contends these beliefs are very seldom questionable and are usually very personal often unaffected by persuasion. Researchers (Pajares, 1992; Rath, 2001) have argued these personal beliefs are closely linked to beliefs about teaching, learning and epistemology.

**Beliefs about teaching, learning and the curriculum:** Such beliefs originate from teachers' own personal experiences as learners and professional experience as teachers (Pajares, 1992). Nespor (1987) gave an example of a teacher who due to traumatic experiences as a student attempted to create an ideal teaching situation in her classroom, which she had fantasized about as a student.

**Epistemological beliefs:** These are beliefs about different aspects of knowledge, such as how knowledge is defined, constructed, justified and stored (Nespor, 1987; Hofer, 2002). They are a combination of elements of judgment and evaluation and researchers (Bandura, 1987, Pajares, 1992; Fives & Buehl, 2005) have contended that an analysis of teachers' epistemological beliefs about teaching knowledge may provide an insight into understanding their cognition and self-efficacy. This combination of affect and evaluation, explained Bandura (1987), can give researchers insights into the various aspects of teaching practices, such as the amount and the way of expending energy on any classroom activity.

Another associated area of belief that all teachers indeed have are religious beliefs (Mansour, 2008) and although such beliefs are occasionally apparent in the data these are beyond the scope of this study.

In the course of this thesis, and mindful of the complex issues raised regarding the concept of 'belief,' the focus will be placed on identifying teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards special needs and inclusion and their links to their teaching pedagogies. Many scholars believe implementation of any reform movement heavily depends upon teachers (Pajares, 1992; Tobin et al., 1994; Levitt, 2002). Avramidis et al. (2000) and Lambe and Bones (2007) wrote that the traditional roles of the teacher and learner have been challenged in the on-going discussion about introducing and implementing inclusive practices in mainstream education. Teachers have been faced with increased pressure as their roles have diversified in the contemporary classrooms as compared to their predecessors, for they are now expected to adapt their learning styles and strategies to cater for the diverse learning needs present at school (Peterson & Beloin, 1992). The requirements of inclusion demand, according to Mullen (2001), educators to have psychological as well as physical preparedness to handle the new demands of being an inclusive educator. Moreover, mainstream teachers need to exhibit dynamism involving continuous physical adjustments to the classroom environment as well as a willingness to review and adjust their attitudes where appropriate. Regarding this latter point, Beattie et al. (1997) stressed that more emphasis needs to be placed on attitudinal changes than hitherto in order to create barrier-free access to educational opportunities for all learners.

Although inclusive education can be perceived as an exciting challenge (Bernard, 1990), reaping benefits for many, some educators find it stressful as well as physiologically and psychologically draining (Forlin, 1995). In fact, as has become apparent from the literature cited in previous chapters, some educators consider inclusion as too challenging and therefore not feasible, whereas others regard it as an opportunity for professional and personal growth. The beliefs/attitudes of teachers regarding inclusion are complex, but they need to be unpacked as they play a pivotal role in establishing effective inclusive settings (Norwich, 1994b; Villa et al., 1996; Minke et al., 1996; Beattie et al., 1997; Avramidis et al., 2000; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). That is, they are tasked with recognising the learning differences amongst their pupils and subsequently providing effective interventions that result in a vibrant inclusive classroom

(Norwich, 1994b). Consequently, Van Reusen et al. (2003) and Hammond and Ingalls (2003) have stressed that teachers' attitudes need to be examined as they influence critically the level of acceptance of CWSN in mainstream classrooms. From a whole school perspective, Norwich (1994b) elicited that teachers' attitudes and level of commitment to inclusion can strongly influence the policy and practice adopted across the entire institution. Taking this further, Barton (1992) and Avramidis et al. (2000) expressed the opinion that the ultimate responsibility for effective inclusion lies more with the teachers than with the policy makers, for more often than not it is the role of the teacher in the classroom that is the deciding factor as to how much and how well inclusion is taking place in a particular school.

As pointed out above and as revealed in a number of investigations (Williams, 1990; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1991; Janney et al., 1995; Vaughn et al., 1996; Sebastian & Buckner, 1998; Avramidis et al., 2000; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002), teachers have both negative and positive attitudes towards the idea of including CWSN in mainstream classrooms. As pointed out in previous chapters, they have a negative attitude towards inclusion when they have not had direct experience. That is, their lack of engagement with special needs educators and CWSN has led to them being unaware of the advantages that inclusion can bring to their classrooms. Moreover, teachers not having the necessary skills has been cited as another reason for their resistance to the implementation of inclusion (Kauffman et al., 1988; Kauffman et al., 1989). Likewise, Villa et al.'s study (1996) also reported on teachers' negative perceptions towards inclusion when they had faced no such experience in their teaching or had not been a participant in any inclusive programme training. However, many Western scholars have questioned whether it is necessary to have different skills to teach children who have mild disabilities (Semmel et al., 1991; Minke et al., 1996). In other words, they claim that children with minor special needs, such as moderately impaired vision or missing a limb, might not be necessarily requiring a set of specialized skills from mainstream teachers other than a heightened awareness of the children's needs and strategies to meet these.

Even for teachers who have favourable leanings towards inclusion, they can carry a perception of themselves as unprepared or incompetent to cater for the needs of CWSN in their mainstream classrooms (Stephens & Braun, 1980; Schumm & Vaughn, 1991). This lack of confidence, suggested Center and Ward (1987), does not just stem from the perception of their own capabilities, but is also due to the poor quality of the support available to them in terms of resources, personnel, time and encouragement. Moreover, the feasibility of the curricular adaptations required for CWSN in mainstream classrooms is a key concern (Minke et al., 1996). Regarding this, Schumm & Vaughn (1991) and Ysseldyke et al. (1990) conducted research to explore teachers' views on the issue of curricular modifications and their findings revealed that whereas their views were generally favourable, they still questioned their practicality owing to time constraints etc. In fact, Center & Ward (1987) had earlier elicited that such anxieties meant that many teachers were only prepared to engage in curriculum modifications for those CWSN who did not require extra instructional or management techniques on their part. Further, it has transpired in other studies (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Semmel et al., 1994) that teachers, although not refusing to teach CWSN on a personal basis, felt that they would not be able to do justice to the whole class or give sufficient individual attention to those in need. In particular, as they explained, they were often under pressure to meet achievement targets for the whole class and thus, were unable to give more time as this could result in lower educational achievement overall (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Semmel et al., 1994).

By contrast, a commitment towards including children with special needs in their mainstream classrooms was identified when teachers had been involved in the implementation phase of inclusion, for they often then proceeded to develop the confidence and expertise needed (Villa et al., 1996). That is, the evidence from this study indicated that teachers' attitudes are not entrenched and with practical exposure, experience and support, can change considerably. In general, these authors concluded that the implementation phase often serves as a platform and opportunity for teachers to acquire experience and develop skills to cater effectively for the diverse learning needs in their classrooms. Similar findings were identified from a study conducted by Avramidis et al. (2000), where

teachers who had been involved in the implementation of a programme on inclusion had developed more favourable attitudes towards this as compared to those who had had minimal or no exposure.

This small scale study is seeking to explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs about inclusion and special needs and their pedagogical practices. Teachers' beliefs about 'disability or exceptional needs' play an important role in influencing their attitudes as well as their teaching styles in their diverse classrooms, according to Jordan et al. (1997b:83). They found that teaching styles differed in relation to whether teachers' views were based on the belief that the disability of the child is inherent or not. That is, those who perceived a child's disabling condition as an outcome of the interaction between the student and the environment followed different teaching strategies to those who did not. The interventionist approach of the former led to them becoming more engaged in bridging gaps between the academic content and student understanding than the latter. To conclude this debate, Vaughn et al. (1996), giving weight to the previous discussion, asserted that attitudes and commitment of the teacher can change, but only gradually and that there are several factors that have an impact on commitment, including: beliefs and experiences, class size, training, level and type of disability as well as teacher expectations, to which I now turn. It should be noted that the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices may be related to several factors, such as their expectations, their experience, school community, types of disabilities, kinds and levels of professional training and support (Pajares, 1992; Savasci-Acikalin, 2009). These factors will be discussed in sequence during the course of this chapter.

### **4.3. Teacher expectations**

Low expectations and aspirations were found to be the biggest barrier to creating inclusive schools (Rouse 2008). These, explains this author, can be based on a belief that education is a privilege to be given to few and not an entitlement for all students, which can lead to teachers having negative views about the potential achievement levels of some children. Carrington and Brownlee (2001) found that often negative attitudes on the part of teachers lead to low expectations of CWSN, which manifest themselves in a reduction in learning opportunities, thereby

resulting in lower academic achievement. However, Timperley and Robinson (2001) and Deppeler (2006) found that teachers' expectations of CWSN, which at times were low to start with, when asked to reflect on their planning and teaching methods, increased the level of the challenges put to these children, thus leading to higher academic performance. In more detail, in Deppeler's study (2006), teachers were challenged to question the beliefs and assumptions they had initially formed about their students in a constructive manner, and as they became more competent, they gained confidence in developing their teaching pedagogies, thus be able to set appropriate achievement targets for their students. Furthermore, this reflection on their practices developed their understanding of what students needed to learn. As has been mentioned previously, research supports evolving attitudes and expectations towards or about inclusive education through the process of experience and implementation (Leroy & Simpson, 1996). That is, there is a body of evidence (Hart, 1996, 1998; Hart et al., 2004 ; Peters & Reid, 2006) suggesting a considerable shift in teachers' thinking and practice can be made when they are challenged on their notion of disability being a barrier to learning. Regarding this, their initial beliefs about special needs and inclusion and their expectations of the pupils can change and develop as they gain experience that allows for differences to be taken into account in their practice (Florian, 2008). In a slightly different vein, Pandeliadou and Lamproboulou (1997), in their investigation noted that teacher expectations that inclusion would have a positive outcome on CWSN academically and socially, increased the chances of inclusion being effective and successful, and also won these pupils' acceptance from their peers.

#### **4.4. Teacher experience**

Subban and Sharma's study (2005) that drew on Azjen's (1991) theory of changing behaviours, ascertained that there are a number of factors that contribute to changing attitudes and behaviours of teachers towards inclusion. Their study identified, for example, past and present experiences and also, newly acquired knowledge of teachers as critical contributing facets that influence teachers' attitudes towards including CWSN in their mainstream classrooms. However, some of the evidence is conflicting regarding beliefs about inclusion based on

their experience, for it emerged in some work that more experienced teachers were less inclined towards inclusion (Harvey, 1985; Forlin et al., 1996), whereas other studies (Leyser et al., 1994; Leroy & Simpson, 1996) found that their confidence and skills increased in providing for CWSN and hence, were more favourably disposed to it. Similarly, Clough and Lindsay's (1991) investigation indicated that teachers' attitudes become favourable towards inclusion as the years pass, primarily because of their experience in providing for special needs in their classrooms. Moreover, the phased implementation of inclusion, they suggested, added to teachers' professional knowledge and skills deemed necessary for such programmes. Villa et al. (1996) found that some mainstream teachers supported the inclusion of CWSN and had a favourable perception without having had prior experience of this.

Leyser et al. (1994) found a visible and positive change in attitudes when teachers gained experience and had social contact with disabled students. This change took place in combination with acquiring knowledge and appropriate skills in instructional and class management, bringing about a positive inclination and attitude towards inclusion. Likewise, Briggs et al.'s (2002) study stressed that the nature of the previous experience or contact has to be favourable, if attitudes are to change towards a positive stance. A study by Stephens and Braun (1980), on the other hand, found no evidence that increased experience of teachers working with CWSN resulted in favourable attitudes towards including them in the mainstream classroom. Indeed, increased social contact, Forlin's (1995) study indicated, acted as a detriment in producing unfavourable behaviours towards inclusion. According to this author, teachers were of the view that inclusion of CWSN in their classroom put them under constant stress. That is, their anxiety and apprehension about teaching such children proved to be an obstacle in creating positive attitudes towards inclusion. Although the majority of teachers in Scruggs and Mastropieri's (1996) meta-analysis of studies on attitudes claimed to believe in the general concept of inclusion, not all had faith in it as a realistic goal. Harvey's (1985) comparative investigation sought to compare the willingness of trainee teachers and experienced primary teachers in post and he found that the latter were more reluctant towards inclusion than the former. Their



ideas on inclusion becoming, Scruggs and Mastropieri elicited, was also based on their views of the types of disabilities that could be included in the mainstream.

#### **4.5. Type of disability**

The nature of a disability is one of the deciding factors in teachers' willingness to include CWSN (Center & Ward, 1987). That is, their level of favourability towards inclusion is governed by the type and severity of the disability (Forlin et al., 1996; Croll & Moses, 2000). In fact, Bochner and Pieterse's (1989) study revealed that this was a more important factor to be taken into account than the background or experience of the teacher. Similarly, a review of the literature from 1958 to 1995 undertaken by Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996), elicited that educators' level of support for inclusion is heavily dependent on the severity or the type of disability/special needs of the child. That is, teachers in this study believed the goal of inclusion realistic, but the degree to which it could be achieved was dependent upon the disabling conditions of the CWSN. In the same vein, Forlin (1995) found an increase in the severity of disability was a major factor in teachers declining to accept CWSN in their mainstream classrooms. Similarly, Ward et al.'s (1994) study determined that teachers favoured including children who had mild disabilities and did not require extra time or skills from the teacher, but those who required it, extra resources or specialised skills were not deemed suitable. Ward et al. (1994) also suggested that rejection was based on the grounds of the challenges the children presented, and that many teachers believed that severely impaired children would be better catered for in a special school.

Research by Forlin (1995) revealed that educators are more accepting of children with physical disabilities as compared to those who have intellectual impairment. Moreover, she found that teachers favour part-time inclusion over full-time for CWSN in regular classrooms. Emotional and behavioural difficulties were found to be very challenging by teachers in Clough and Lindsay's (1991) study and those involved expressed a reluctance to include children who exhibited behaviour problems or created disruption in their mainstream classroom environments. Chazan's (1994) review gave similar evidence of teachers exhibiting a more positive stance towards including children with sensory and physical impairments as compared to those with emotional and behavioural

difficulties. Likewise, results from Bowman's (1986) UNESCO study revealed that teachers find physical disabilities and medical conditions relatively easier to include as compared to other forms. In terms of exclusion, consistent evidence is provided in Chazan's (1994) review, revealing a dramatic rise over the years of children exhibiting emotional and behavioural difficulties having their attendance at regular schools being barred or modified in some way. That is, CWSN, as a result of placement decisions, now attend school in large numbers across a whole host of different forms, including: special, inclusive, separate with some form of included provision or included with some degree of split conditions (Norwich, 2008). In conclusion, many teachers in the mainstream believe that that some disabilities are beyond their capabilities of making adequate provision and that specially trained staff in special schools can better provide for CWSN. However, Berryman (1989) pointed out that teachers' judgments on the nature of disabling conditions in many cases are flawed and this can have a negative impact on beliefs and hence, the extent to which they are prepared to reach out to CSWN. The issue of equipping teachers with adequate training in these matters is addressed in the next section.

#### **4.6. Training/professional development**

As pointed out above, the resistance of mainstream teachers towards including CWSN is often based on a perception of inadequate training (Minke et al., 1996; Heiman, 2001). Hence, for inclusion to be achieved by any school, as Avramidis and Norwich (2002) proposed, a well-structured plan for professional development needs to be in place, if teachers are to address the diverse learning needs presented in their classrooms effectively (Leyser, 1988; Williams, 1990; Whinnery et al., 1991). In the same vein, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) contended that it is through coherent and planned training that teachers are able to gain knowledge and understanding about the diverse learning needs the CWSN in their classroom present and about appropriate teaching techniques. Moreover, adequate effective teacher training plays a key role in developing positive attitudes towards inclusion even where previously these did not exist (Wilczenski, 1993; Avramidis et al., 2000). Likewise, training and guidance, according to Poonam and Belfiore (1996), can be instrumental in changing teachers' attitudes

towards disability and inclusion. In addition, results from some studies have shown that teachers who have had specific training to deal with CWSN exhibited more positive attitudes than their counterparts who had had none (Shimman, 1990; Beh - Pajooah, 1992).

Research by Subban and Sharma (2005) indicates that inadequate or lack of training to prepare teachers for inclusion during their initial teacher training can often lower their confidence when faced with the challenges this presents. Slee (2001) advocated that there should be an emphasis on interdisciplinary studies of exclusion and inclusion, recommending that teaching placement in pro-actively inclusive schools so as to enhance and nurture positive attitudes. Lambe and Bones (2007) concluded from their study on teaching placement during the one year postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) that the nature of the training proved to be instrumental in influencing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. That is, during pre-service training these authors identified a positive shift in attitudes on inclusion, and evidence of increased confidence, whilst previously having shared their apprehension about their having little or no knowledge about special needs.

The outcomes of several international studies (Center & Ward, 1987; Buell et al., 1999; Van-Reusen et al., 2000; Avramidis et al., 2000) have reinforced the idea of changing attitudes during the course of effective professional development programmes in terms of decreasing resistance to inclusive practices. Poonam and Belfiore (1996) pointed out that mainstream teachers are often willing to teach CWSN and believe in inclusion as a principle, but suffer frustration when they are unable to cater for the diverse learning needs in the absence of any training and required skills. Beare (1985) stressed the need for this aspect of teaching to be a focus in pre-service training programmes, where it is important to emphasise that one of the key objectives of pedagogy is to sustain a positive attitude towards inclusion. Similarly, inclusion cannot be implemented effectively, according to Tait and Purdie (2000) Blair (1983), if new teachers complete their training without developing a willing attitude towards CWSN's participation in their classrooms. Moreover, Dickens-Smith (1995) concluded that staff development in

the form of pre-service or in-service teacher training should be regarded as a vital aspect towards the achievement of inclusion.

However, professional development is not just about training as it also requires teachers to have opportunities to analyse and reflect on their own thinking and practice (Ainscow, 2000b). This can be carried out through peer observation, peer coaching and/or peer partnerships and can help remove barriers to learning as well as correct wrongly perceived notions about their role. Moreover, it can stimulate and motivate them modify their practice with confidence. In a similar vein, Rouse (2008) asserted that extending teachers' knowledge by providing more training and discussing techniques is insufficient. For, it is the encouragement that teachers need to do things differently and to be able to use the newly acquired techniques that will be a step towards reconsidering their beliefs and attitudes about any aspects of their practice, especially inclusion. He presented a three point reciprocal triangular relationship model of 'knowing', 'doing' and 'believing' (Rouse, 2008:15). The first element, he contended, is about increasing and providing teachers with the knowledge of how children learn and various teaching strategies to cater for these. During the second component of 'doing', he posited that teachers need to be encouraged to try out new strategies, and move from reflection to practice. Lastly, changes in the areas of knowledge and during the implementation stage, he claimed, create a platform for change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes. He further put forward that any two features from the triangle can have an impact on the third and that if any two elements are in place then the third will follow (ibid). That is, all three aspects are interrelated and teachers mostly are at a stage where one or more of these elements can influence the other(s), as this section of the review has indicated.

#### **4.7. Support for teachers**

The availability of support services has been cited by many as one of the most important factors in encouraging teachers to favour and thus implement inclusion (Center & Ward, 1987; Clough & Lindsay, 1991). Regarding this, Avramidis et al. (2000) stressed that the nature and level of support are of prime importance and can affect teachers' beliefs about inclusion. Support can take various forms, including physical resources, such as teaching materials, audio-visual aids,

technology and changes made to the structure of the classroom or the school as well as human input in form of teaching assistants, special teachers, physiotherapists, speech therapists or occupational therapists. It was found in some research that the provision of such teaching resources by the school somewhat relieved teachers' apprehensions and stress about teaching CWSN as they were perceived as supporting them in dealing with the special needs in their classrooms (Janney et al., 1995; LeRoy & Simpson, 1996). Perhaps unsurprisingly, smaller class sizes were also found to generate positive attitudes amongst teachers towards inclusion (Center & Ward, 1987; Clough & Lindsay, 1991). In addition, supportive head teachers were seen as a valuable source providing the encouragement that increased self-esteem, thereby assisting their teaching staff to take on the task of teaching CWSN effectively.

Results from studies by Jordan et al. (1997) and Stanovich & Jordan (1998), based on interviews and observations of inclusive classroom teaching, revealed that teachers' attitudes were also based on the degree to which the school ethos was consistent with the enhancement of their inclusive practices. More specifically, continuous encouragement, appreciation as well as guidance from the head teachers and school leadership were found to increase the tolerance level of the teachers, which in turn promoted a better understanding and a more optimistic approach towards inclusion (Center & Ward, 1987; Chazan, 1994). Such outcomes have prompted Hammond and Ingalls (2003) to claim that the support of the head teacher and other school leaders is critical in encouraging teachers to implement inclusive practices. In other words, much depends on the kind of vision the principal or head teacher holds regarding the implementation of inclusive practices, as it significantly impacts on the process of inclusion, according to Daane et al. (2000). Support from specialist resource teachers or teaching assistants has also been identified as an important factor in developing positive teacher attitudes towards inclusion (Kauffman et al., 1989; Janney et al., 1995).

Conversely, there is considerable evidence (Center & Ward, 1987; Clough & Lindsay, 1991; Janney et al., 1995; Leroy & Simpson, 1996; Daniel & King, 1997; Avramidis et al., 2000) that the absence of classroom or school support,

lack of a school ethos, large classes, inaccessible physical environment, lack of resources/teaching materials and insufficient time to plan, are key reasons for the unwillingness of teachers to adopt inclusion. Furthermore, these aspects can strongly influence teachers' beliefs about themselves and about disability in general, as well as attitudes towards inclusion and inclusive practice.

#### **4.8. Teachers' beliefs and the school community**

The beliefs of the school community as well as those of the teachers are important for any successful school reform movement (Haney et al., 2003). These researchers identified the stakeholders involved in this group as the school leadership and administration, students, parents and the whole local community. Wenger (1998) described this grouping of all stakeholders by bringing them under the umbrella term 'communities of practice' (1998: 06), which are formed by people who are engaged in a process of collective learning, who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. Not all communities, she wrote, can be called a community of practice, for it has distinct features: first, the members have a commitment to the domain, second, members engage in joint activities, discussions and sharing and lastly the members are all practitioners, with there being shared practice of resources, experiences, tools and ways of addressing issues. The learning environment, she further explained, most importantly cannot be just based on the teachers' beliefs, but also should take into account those of the school leaders, parents, community members and the students.

This collective activity of learning, Wenger (1998) pointed out, becomes an important aspect of the change process. Similarly, Harris (2001) wrote that collaborative school cultures where teachers are engaged in cooperative reflective practices provide opportunities for school leaderships to bring about change and development in their practices. Furthermore, support for the teachers and opportunities for their professional development are also important areas that have to be addressed by the leadership if progress is to be achieved in their classroom practices (Haney et al., 1996). In the same vein, Haney et al.'s (1996) study revealed that the beliefs of the whole school community are an important factor affecting teaching in the classrooms. In this regard, parents are viewed as

important stakeholders in the community and their involvement and participation, in particular, have been a strong driving force behind the pursuit of options for inclusion for CWSN (Comer, 1987; Erwin & Soodak, 1995; Ryndak et al., 1995; Hunt & Goetz, 1997; Zollers et al, 1999). Lumpe et al.'s study (2000) identified societal values and actions undoubtedly affect teachers' capability and context. That is, societal beliefs and attitudes, as these researchers explained, have a trickledown effect on the teachers, which is reflected in their classroom practices. The outer community they further clarified also includes the school districts as well as the media. Specifically, their study findings also highlight the need for communities to provide teachers with a supportive environment and specifically suggest the role of the media should be to engage in impartial reporting that provides positive public relations depicting the success stories as well as identifying the issues hampering learning progress in schools.

#### **4.9. Summary and conclusion**

Rouse (2008) asserted that teachers' beliefs in relation to inclusion and their willingness to try to implement it are powerful drivers for its fulfilment in mainstream schools. In terms of actual practice, Bunch and Finnegan (2000) have written that enthusiasm and motivation of pupils towards achieving educational goals has been seen to increase as a result of inclusion in mainstream classrooms and that teachers, for the most part, believed that it helps in minimising barriers to learning, developing socialization and communication skills as well as in fostering positive self-esteem amongst all children in the these classrooms. However, Florian (2008) expressed the belief that a positive attitude alone is not sufficient to promote inclusive practices or inclusion in a mainstream school as this needs to be underpinned by resources and support.

Beliefs do, however, go deeper than this, given that in recent years, the advocates for inclusive education across the globe have started to adopt a human rights based approach, with: human rights activists, educationalists, researchers, theorists and international agencies supporting inclusion in mainstream education as a fundamental human right (UN, 1993; Ainscow, 1999; Quinn et al., 2002; Rioux, 2007; Florian, 2008). Along the same lines, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) wrote that qualifications towards inclusion cannot be made on the basis of

variations in different philosophies, education systems and practices, for the evidence to date, notwithstanding some contradictions, suggests an overarching belief that education is not just for a selected few according to how children are labelled or who has the ability to learn and who has not. Furthermore, Poonam and Belfiore (1996) reminded us that students as well as the teachers should be equally involved in the inclusion dialogue as conversations about learning and entitlement can play an important role in its effective application by all the stakeholders. Regarding this, according to Rioux (2007) teachers need to develop inclusive pedagogy in a purposeful working environment that offers opportunities for them to learn how to suit the diverse learning needs consistent with their fundamental beliefs, which in turn can be communicated to the students, thus enhancing their own self-belief and sense of well-being. In summary, Pajares (1992:329) concluded that the study of teachers' beliefs 'can inform educational practice in ways that prevailing research agendas have not'. Moreover, reformers and researchers, Bingimlas and Hanrahan (2010) have suggested, need to understand the importance as well as complexities of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practice. In the next chapter, the research methods employed for exploring these issues in the chosen empirical school settings are explained and justified as well the ways in which the data outcomes were analysed.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Methodology and Methods**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I explain how I designed my study of the inclusive practices being developed in two primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan and their teachers' beliefs and values related to inclusion. I describe the research design with reference to the ontological and epistemological frameworks used to guide my research process and I detail my justification for my choice of the qualitative paradigm. I then explain my pre pilot and pilot studies and how the research questions and the research tools were developed and modified in the light of these initial explorations as well as in relation to my literature reviews. I critically describe the questions of access and sampling in relation to my participants and describe the cohort more fully. I explain my approach towards using semi-structured interviews, background surveys and field notes to collect data. I describe how I coded and analysed my data set. I then move on to consider some of the practical and ethical issues that were involved in this study and the reflexive measures that were undertaken. I finish with an initial account of some of the constraints I encountered during the study. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key points.

#### **5.2. Ontological and epistemological frameworks**

Before I move to detail and discuss the methods that I have deployed in my study, I start with a brief discussion of my ontological and epistemological framing (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). This is because together they provide a justification for the way in which I have collected my data. By ontology, I mean the way in which I see reality and social existence in this study and the way in which my approach then suggests a specific methodological approach. Snape and Spencer (2003) argue that reality is socially constructed, so research needs to start with an appreciation of how the social actors involved in any project make up their social worlds. The ontological stance taken in this thesis draws on social constructivism which, according to Bryman (2012:33), is a position where 'social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors'. Thus, in my

exploration of a small number of primary teachers' views about special needs and inclusion, my research stance recognises that their beliefs and values will be constructions and co-constructions produced in contexts and settings that shift and change. Thus, the perceptions of the teachers in my study will be constructed based on the societal attitudes towards disability in Pakistan as well as in the light of their experiences and their education in this field as well as their situated school setting.

Very broadly, epistemological questions are concerned with what is taken to be valid knowledge as well as how to obtain it (Bryman, 2012). Snape and Spencer (2003: 17) claim that if knowledge is understood as socially embedded and socially constructed then researchers need to take an approach to data collection that will 'explore and understand the social world using both the participants and the researchers understanding'. A social scientist reaches out and captures the way people do things and understands and justifies what it is that they are doing (Hughes, 1997). I take an approach towards knowledge production and a view of social reality that argues for an interpretivist approach in my research methodology (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). Marsh and Furlong (2002: 26) argue that taking an interpretative approach implies that 'objective' analysis is impossible as any judgement is based on the researcher's interpretation and this is subjective. In my present research investigation I am interpreting my participants' understanding of special needs and inclusion.

Research has been broadly characterised as falling into two paradigms, qualitative and quantitative (Creswell, 1994; Silverman, 2000; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001; Patton, 2002). Increasingly, a combination of the two is used within the framework of a single investigation. As Silverman (2000) and Snape and Spencer (2003) state, when it comes to selecting an approach, there is no such notion as right or wrong and the choice should be based on the nature of the enquiry; that is, fitness for purpose (Bell, 2010). Given the ontological and epistemological stance of social constructivism and interpretivism a qualitative methodology is adopted in this investigation. For, as Creswell (1994:18) suggests, qualitative enquiry is 'a process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture', which is the aim of my current research.

That is, the aim of a qualitative study is to investigate the value of relationships, activities, situations or materials and it allows for in depth analysis to comprehend a phenomenon that is studied in its natural settings through human interpretations (Creswell, 2003).

Strauss and Corbin (1990:17) saw a qualitative approach as being ‘any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification’. Thus findings in a qualitative study are not based on quantifiable measures, but rather delve deeper into the understandings and meanings of interpretations offered by the respondents. As Patton (2002:10) puts it, these approaches ‘put faces on the statistics’. Researchers are often drawn more towards a qualitative approach as it gives ‘them endless possibilities to learn more about people’, also, it gives them ‘the opportunity to connect with their participants at the human level’ (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:13).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005:4), a qualitative approach allows the researcher to deploy a ‘range of interconnected interpretive practices’ through using various methods and techniques in order to gather rich and detailed data that contribute to producing an in-depth understanding of participants’ perceptions and constructions of their social worlds. To obtain this rich information, the researcher relies on subjective techniques of data collection, such as: in depth interviews, observations and field notes. Collecting data through semi structured interviews and field notes I aimed to gain an insight into my respondents’ views and beliefs about special needs and inclusion grounded in their experience as teachers.

### **5.3. Pilot studies**

I started my study with a strong commitment towards the need to develop more inclusive education practices in Pakistan and I decided that an exploration of the practices and beliefs of a small number of teachers in two primary schools would be a useful way in which to start to map the school context in this field (as explained in chapter 1, pgs. 3 and 4). Given that inclusion in schools is at a different stage in Pakistan when contrasted with northern hemisphere settings, and given that I wanted to ‘test’ where moves were beginning to take place, I

decided to select two schools that were starting to develop inclusive education practices (Azad, 2005). In this way, I would be hopeful of finding some teachers whose views were changing. I also hoped to be able to provide useful examples for wider consideration in Pakistan of what might and could be done in this area of education practice.

However, before I undertook my main study, it seemed sensible to conduct some pilot investigations in order to refine my research questions (see below) as well as to start to develop the research tools that would help me to collect useful data in order to explore these questions in depth. In this section, I briefly explain the process of carrying out a small pre pilot and pilot study from which my wider study was developed. VanTeijlingen and Hundley (2001) advocate conducting a pilot study as a way of constructing and refining the research design. Oppenheim (2000) describes the process of designing and then testing research questions and procedures as 'pilot work' (2000:47) and in keeping with this advice, I began my field work by conducting a small pre pilot and pilot investigation to test my conceptual framework to see if it was adequate enough to explore teachers beliefs and attitudes about special needs and inclusion. The initial ideas for my research questions stemmed from my own background in the field of special and inclusive education and from the literature reviewed about inclusive education, teachers' beliefs about special needs and their links to inclusion.

I conducted my pre pilot in London as I was based here during the early stages of my research. I identified three primary teachers (originally from Pakistan) working in various schools in London, who had had prior experience of working in schools in Karachi, Pakistan. These teachers had knowledge of two educational contexts and hence, were able to provide useful insights about matters related to the inclusion of children in schools in both settings.

The pre-pilot exploration was followed by a pilot study undertaken in Pakistan in February 2010, and for this second piece of work the participants were three primary teachers from one mainstream school located in Karachi. The school was known to me from an earlier study which looked at some mainstream schools where CWSN were on the roll (Azad, 2005), but it was not part of my main data

sample. The method of gaining access to the research site and participants is crucial for a research investigation (Lewis, 2003). Creswell (2013: 188) points out that this is generally obtained through the approval of ‘key gatekeepers’: individuals who can grant access to the research site and to the respondents. The head teacher of the school acted as gatekeeper in my pilot study in Pakistan and her permission had to be sought to work in the school and with its teachers. It was with her support and guidance that I was able to conduct the pilot effectively.

The school had some apprehensions about being part of my pilot study and these concerns had to be addressed sensitively through several phone calls from London to Karachi, followed by a regular exchange of emails and the presentation of an information sheet to explain the aims and objectives of the work (see appendix 1). Consequently I was able to set up some dates and the timings for my pilot study fieldwork. These preparations were undertaken prior to my travel to Karachi, so that I had robust plans in place for using my time there efficiently. The six teacher interview samples from both pilots (in London and in Karachi) comprised three teachers at each location, all of whom were female and within the age range of 25 to 55 years. They were each provided with an information sheet and a consent form prior to the start of the interviews (see appendix 1 & 2). I collected some basic biographical information using a background survey (see appendix 3) and I undertook short semi structured interviews based on an aide memoire (see appendix 4).

Carrying out these small-scale pilot investigations allowed for improvements to be made to my research plans. The research questions were revised and further modified (see appendix 5) as initially they just focussed on teachers’ beliefs and attitudes about special needs and inclusion and how teachers’ beliefs were linked to their classroom practices in addressing these phenomena. After the pilot interviews, I realised that I needed to include a question related to the schools’ policies and practices towards inclusion. The pilot exercise also helped me in developing the background survey (explained in the section on this survey) as well as developing my interviewing skills. In particular regarding this, when I listened to the audio recordings of my interviews, I realised that I had a tendency sometimes to ask leading questions rather than work to elicit the respondents’

views through a more tentative probing of the issues. Moreover, I modified and reworked the aide-mémoire for use during the semi-structured interviews as explained in the section on interviews.

#### **5.4. Research questions**

Bordage and Dawson (2003:378) state that ‘the single most important component of a study is the research question’; ‘it is the keystone of the entire exercise’ (:378). Research questions help to set boundaries and frame what is to be done (O’Leary, 2004). Through conducting and reflecting on the pre pilot and the pilot studies as well as reviewing the literature on teachers’ beliefs about inclusion and the school’s role in promoting inclusion, I was able to refine my main research questions into the following areas for investigation:

RQ 1) What are the teachers’ views of the existing policies and practices that promote inclusion in two mainstream schools in Karachi?

RQ 2) What are these teachers’ beliefs about special needs and inclusion?

RQ 3) How do teachers’ beliefs about inclusion impact on their pedagogical practices?

My overall aims were, first, to identify the practices of the schools as a potential hub for the promotion of inclusion and second, to investigate teachers’ beliefs about special needs and inclusion. More specifically, with respect to question 1, I wanted to include teachers’ perceptions and views about the practices in their schools, whereas question 2 was meant to identify their own beliefs about special needs and inclusion. Through question 3 my intention was to ascertain the strategies teachers said they employed when addressing the diverse learning needs of children in their classrooms. Each of these research questions is addressed in detail in the empirical chapters, Chapters 6 to 8.

#### **5.5. Schools, access and sample for the main study**

##### **5.5.1. Research schools**

Turning now to my main study, the settings for my investigation were two mainstream private primary schools located in the city of Karachi, Pakistan. I wanted to explore teachers’ beliefs about special needs and inclusion and how in

their view their schools were approaching these issues. I approached these particular schools because they were locally well known as having policies and practices aimed at working towards including CWSN (Azad, 2005). Moreover, I was aware that the children on roll had a range of special needs, including: hearing, physical, intellectual and visual impairment, autism, attention deficit and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder as well as learning disabilities like dyslexia and dysgraphia. The choice of two schools enabled me to have a suitably sized sample of teachers whose classroom practice would involve coming into contact with a range of these disabilities.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the institutions the two schools have been given the pseudonyms of Millennium School and Centenary School. The former opened in 1990, as a primary level institution with just one small building and over the years it expanded to offer 'O' level (ordinary level) and 'A' level (advanced level) examinations, following the curricula and examinations provided by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), the overseas school examinations department of Cambridge University, UK. The medium of instruction is English, with Urdu taught as a subject. Considerable attention is paid to the professional development of staff, with the provision of continuous in-house as well as outside training and development programmes.

At the time of my research, Millennium School, situated in a densely populated area of the city, had three purpose built buildings. It had a large number of staff and students, with the number of students in the primary section approaching nearly 900. The teachers and students come from what in Pakistan would be called middle and upper middle class backgrounds. That is, the parents of the students were from economically well off backgrounds and could afford private schooling. Although the school follows the Cambridge system of education, considerable importance is placed on religious instruction, with an emphasis on moral values. The teaching staff comprises mostly females, with some male teachers for specialist subjects like sports and taekwondo. The female staff follow the Islamic dress code (shalwar kameez and head covering). Millennium school has large custom built classrooms and given the hot tropical climate, each has large windows, providing sufficient light as well as cross ventilation. Class sizes

varied between 30 and 35 students, with grades 1-3 having four sections (four class intakes), each studying English, maths, science social studies, Urdu, which was merged with Islamiyat (religious studies), arts, computers and sports.

Centenary School was a much smaller institution with three small rented residential bungalows that had been converted to house the primary, junior and secondary pupils. It had a relatively small number of staff and class sizes were limited to between 20 and 25 students per class, with nearly 300 students in total in the primary section. Compared to the Millennium School, it was a much older educational institution as it was established as a Montessori School in 1968 and over the years has built up its provision of 'O' and 'A' levels, being registered with Cambridge International Examinations and the Sindh Education Directorate. As with the Millennium School, the medium of instruction was English and Urdu was taught as a school subject. Similarly, the students came from middle and upper middle class backgrounds. Women formed the majority of the staff alongside a few male teachers who, as at Millennium, mainly delivered specialist subjects, such as: music, sports, creative movement and taekwondo. The women teachers followed the cultural dress code of shalwar kameez, but did not have to follow the Islamic dress code, as was the case at Millennium School.

Similar to Millennium, the resources comprised text books, guide books, work books etc., but also there were white boards in each primary classroom. Grades 1 and 2 also had a library and home corners (discussed more fully in Chapter 8). Compared to Millennium School, Centenary was less well resourced as every nook and corner was used and at times the same space was used for multiple activities. For example, the playground was often turned into a taekwondo field. Centenary had a much smaller computer lab and only one for the whole primary section, where groups of 3-4 students shared one computer and it did not have an art room or even a staff room. There were no ramps at Centenary, where one pre-primary student was a wheel chair user. There were no elevators and also there were no disabled toilets in either school (FN\_CS\_200910 & FN\_MS\_071010). Centenary School being placed in rented spaces did not allow them to make modifications to the infrastructure like disabled access without the agreement of the owner. On the other hand, with the leadership at Millennium also being the



owners this meant they had more authority to bring in modifications if deemed essential. It was not evident whether these schools were aware of the importance of disabled access and even if they were, they might well not have had adequate funds to make any substantial changes. Barrier free access is not a high priority in either private or state run educational institutions in Pakistan, although it has been identified in government documents (discussed in chapter 2), but its implementation has still not been achieved at the ground level (GoP, 2005 & 2006a). Unlike in many Western settings, the issue of access to buildings for the disabled is not a mainstream debate amongst the general population in Pakistan. Hence, there were no pressures on these two schools, either psychologically or coercively, to carry out any building modifications, such as installing a lift so that some CWSN could access the other floors of the schools.

Finally, in contrast to many other private schools in Karachi, these two only provided Cambridge exams and not matriculation at the end of the school career.

#### **5.5.2. Access and sample for the main study**

Given that the focal schools were overseas, contact was made initially through telephone and e-mail communications with the head teachers who consequently acted as the formal gatekeepers, whose permission was being sought to use their school as a study site. For the purposes of clarity and so as to take ethical considerations into account, a brief research proposal, information sheets regarding the nature of the study, and consent forms (meant for the teacher participants of the study) were sent to the heads of the two selected schools (see appendices 1 & 2). The exchange of emails, telephone calls and sharing of these documents all served the purpose of explaining the aims and objectives of the study. In addition, they fostered the schools' awareness of the potential benefits of the study to their institution and towards facilitating the understanding of inclusion in practice in Pakistan (Bogdan & Biklen, 2011). The aim of the study was to focus on classroom practices and the beliefs of the teachers regarding their schools policies and practices. Hence, as the interest was focused on the practitioners' perspectives, the decision was taken not to interview the school heads.

After the initial phase of information sharing with the school heads, dates were set for my data collection in the two schools. I spent some time visiting the schools familiarising myself with the research sites and discussing my research project with the gatekeepers, ensuring that they understood all the aspects of the research project. Being made aware of the investigation, they were very keen to help me and at their suggestion, a staff meeting with teachers of primary section (grades 1-3, my research focus) was arranged in both schools. The meeting gave me the opportunity to explain the goals and purpose of my research investigation with the teachers, stress the importance of their role in the investigation and how they could contribute to it if they were willing to participate. I also gave them the assurance that their contribution to the study would be based on voluntary participation and I detailed how I could be contacted if they wished to take part. After teachers in both the schools had had reasonable time to think and talk to me informally about my research, another meeting was arranged with them. There was more open discussion about my investigation, with queries from the teachers which I tried to respond to in an appropriate way. I also explained and distributed the background survey after the discussion ended. Teachers were given time to think about the background survey sheets and I reiterated that they could contact me anytime to ask any further questions regarding the study and their participation. I received twenty 20 completed surveys from Millennium out of a possible 25 and 18 from Centenary School out of a possible 20. As with the pilots the objective of the background survey was to collect some biographical information about the respondents and their consent for participation in the study.

The next step was to shortlist 15 respondents from each school in order to make my study manageable. I recognised and was advised by my supervisor, that 30 thirty in-depth interviews would yield an extremely large data-set. Thus, I selected a cohort to interview on the basis of teachers with CWSN in their classrooms and those who had indicated that they were willing to be interviewed. Following this I had another meeting to coordinate with the volunteer participants in both the schools on drawing up a timetable for interviewing. I worked very closely with two teachers' in each school who were also coordinators and they helped a great deal in managing the logistics and providing support and access to

the participants, which included managing their timelines. Initially we tried to plan out a full schedule, but in practice, the interview schedule developed on a day to day basis, checking the availability of the participating teachers. I spent approximately a month full time in each school conducting my interviews and collecting field notes.

Before the start of the interview, each participant was given the information sheet and consent form; they were then asked to read and sign the latter. I conducted 30 semi structured interviews, 15 from each school. The 15 participants from Millennium were all female, whereas from Centenary School the sample comprised 13 female and 2 male teachers. All the respondents fell within the age range of 25 to 45 years. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 give background information on the participants' backgrounds from the two schools.

**Table 5.1 Participants from Millennium School**

S.No	Pseudonym of teacher and sex (m/f)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1.	Talat (f)	Urdu, Islamiat and Holy Quran recitation	22 years	Class 2 and 3
2.	Irfana (f)	English and Social Studies	1 year	Class 3 and 4
3.	Saima (f)	English, Science and Social studies	10 years	Class 3 and 4
4.	Afsheen (f)	English reading	16 years	Class 2
5.	Hameeda (f)	English and Science	10 years	Class 3 to 8
6.	Iffat (f)	English, Maths and Science	6 ½ years	Class 2
7.	Ghazal (f)	Holy Quran recitation	19 years	Class 3 and 4
8.	Umbereen (f)	English, Maths and Science	9 years	Class 1 and 2
9.	Shaista (f)	English, Maths and Science	4 years	Class 2

10.	Zeb (f)	Art teacher	2 years	Pre-nursery to Class 2
11.	Sumera (f)	Computing	3 years	Pre-nursery to Class 1
12.	Sameen (f)	Urdu and Islamiat	10 years	Class 3 and 4
13.	Asma (f)	Maths, Social studies and General knowledge	3 years	Class 1 and 2
14.	Adeela (f)	English and Science	10 years	Class 3 and 4
15.	Marium (f)	English and Social studies	21 years	Class 3 - 5

**Table 5.2 Participants from Centenary School**

No	Pseudonym of teacher and m/f	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1.	Faiza (f)	English, Science, Maths, Social studies and journal writing	3 years	Class 2
2.	Nausheen (f)	Urdu	18 years	Class 1 and 2
3.	Farzeen (f)	English, Science, Maths and Social studies	24 years	Class 3
4.	Amal (f)	English, Science, Maths and Social studies	1 ½ years	KG 2 and Class 1
5.	Asifa (f)	English, Science, Maths and Social studies	1 year	Class 1
6.	Asjad (m)	Creative movement	13 years	Class 3 and 4
7.	Alina (f)	Computing	11 years	KG 1 to Class 6
8.	Mahreen (f)	Art and language development	1 month	Class 2

9.	Mercy (f)	Librarian	6 years	Class 3 to 6
10.	Annie (f)	Urdu	12 years	Class 3 and 4
11.	Rakhshanda (f)	Arts and crafts	2 years	Pre-nursery to Class 2
12.	Audrey (f)	Librarian	7 years	Nursery to Class 2
13.	Shireen (f)	Sports	10 years	Class 1 to 7
14.	Ghazanfar (m)	Music	7 years	Nursery to Class 4
15.	Maheen (f)	Maths, Science, English and Environment	2 years	Class 2

## **5.6. Research tools employed**

In this section, I describe the three research tools I employed in collecting my data for the investigation and I also discuss their construction.

### **5.6.1. Background survey**

Initially, I had thought to use a questionnaire to collect information on a number of areas relating to the topic of investigation. Although questionnaires are generally used in survey based researches, they are sometimes used in qualitative studies to collect baseline information about respondents (Mallinson, 2002). The pre pilot and the pilot study meant that I went through a process of reviewing and modifying this particular research tool. Many drafts were created and then recreated. For example, in the earlier drafts I had thought about using a questionnaire to collect some initial information about teachers' beliefs about special needs and disabilities, their awareness of inclusion, and related teaching strategies as well as their experiences in dealing with CWSN. During this initial phase while conducting the pre pilot and pilot studies, I had to consider that my research was an exploratory investigation covering the areas of special needs/disability and inclusive education which are still considered to be contentious in Pakistan as I have explained in chapters 1 and 2. In my view, the

questions that I wanted to explore were too sensitive and complex to be explored through a questionnaire, as this tool might have restricted discussion and prevented any probing and exploration. So finally, after many drafts and much deliberation mainly because of the contentious nature of the topic of research I opted to use a background survey (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984) as a tool for collecting baseline information from each participant (see appendix 3) and decided to use the semi structured interviews to gather detailed and rich data. I was able to use this survey to draw up a list of participants who were willing to take part in the interviewing process.

### **5.6.2. Interviews**

The main research tool that I used in my study was a semi-structured interview, which is a frequently used method of collecting data in qualitative research (Johnson & Turner, 2003). Fontana (2002) considers the interview to be a collaborative effort between the interviewer and the participants(s), also termed the interviewee(s). Holstein and Gubrium (1995) describe interviewing as an active process leading to the creation of a 'story' (:28), which can provide insights into the opinions, understandings, experiences, attitudes and beliefs of the respondents.

I chose to use semi structured interviews to collect my data as they gave me an opportunity to elicit in-depth responses from my respondents, whilst allowing me to manoeuvre the conversation across the specified topics in a meaningful way (Patton, 2002; Bernard, 2005). The structure of semi structured interviews can be loosely framed through a list of issues to be explored and laid out in an aide memoire (McCann & Clark, 2005). I designed the aide memoire (see appendix 4) to cover a list of topics, based on my research questions and the literature surrounding the areas of inclusion. It served as broad guide to the topics of my investigation: school support, teaching strategies, teachers' likes and dislikes about teaching, their understanding and teaching of special needs, assessment and lesson planning; all in the context of inclusion.

My intention was to allow for some structure as well as space for the participants to raise issues and concerns that they wanted to discuss. It further enabled me to

explore the participants' responses and allowed them to talk about their beliefs about special needs and inclusion in greater depth and reflect on their schools policies and practices regarding inclusion (Patton, 2002). In Kitchin's study (2000), research participants reported that they favoured this style of interviewing as it gave them the opportunity to express their feelings. Thus, I hoped that using this approach in my investigation would give my participants the chance to communicate their personal and professional views in relation to my core research questions.

I made audio recordings of the interviews and thus, was able to concentrate on the conversations as well as engage with my participants by looking at them as they were talking so as to gauge how they were feeling. This also freed me up to note down other factors, such as their body language and significant pauses in the flow of the engagement. It meant I could note any areas for probing further. The majority of the interviews were conducted in English but the participants were given the choice of using Urdu (the national language). Consequently, some of the interviews were conducted in English and some in Urdu, whilst others were conducted in both languages. Where appropriate, these were translated into English and for the most part were transcribed by me, but for a few this task was undertaken by a professional transcriber.

Before I started to explore my prepared questions, I shared my own experiences as a teacher and teacher educator in the field of special and inclusive education with my participants to try to put them at ease. The interview questions were both general and specific starting with the respondents family, academic and professional backgrounds leading on to their career choices. Starting with some general questions meant that I had some space in which to try to create a degree of rapport with the respondents and at the same time it allowed the interview to take on the shape of a conversation with the possibility for new leads to be explored (Creswell, 1998). As the interview moved towards more sensitive areas, such as the teacher's beliefs about special needs, disabilities and inclusion, I tried to maintain sensitivity to such topics (see appendices 6 & 7 for the interview schedules for the two schools).

Except for the first interview that I conducted which was held at the participant's home, due to school closure owing to a city wide strike, all the remaining 29 interviews were held in the respective schools in empty classrooms, computer labs, science labs, libraries, and staffrooms when they were not being used and where conversations could not be overheard. The doors were closed and people were asked not to enter in order to maintain confidentiality and privacy. I sent two participants the transcripts of the interviews, one from each school selected at random, so as to obtain their feedback about the data collected (Bryman, 2012) and they reported their concurrence with what had been transcribed with what they had said.

### **5.6.3. Field notes**

During a study sometimes unplanned activities and informal interactions can be very useful (Patton, 2002). Patton, (2002) and Denzin and Lincoln, (2005) suggest that a field worker has to be alert all the time, using their observation skills to document what they perceive is happening in their research setting. Patton (2002: 286) argues that 'everything that goes on in or around the field of study is data' and field notes are an effective way to capture this. With respect to my study, I relied heavily on my field notes as they were the means through which I recorded my observations beyond the formal interviews. They were drawn up in between interviews while I was on the research sites. These included informal observations around the schools as well as informal discussions with members of the administrative and teaching staff. For example, I informally observed taekwondo and pottery sessions at Centenary, sat in the staff room which was an open plan area at that school, had snacks with teachers during recess at Millennium and shared an office space with some administrative staff at the same school. Through these experiences I was embedding myself in the field which enabled me to get a clearer picture of my research settings, a sense of the general culture of the schools as well as giving me an opportunity to explore the feelings and views of individuals about various issues in a more informal way. Furthermore, my notes contained my insights, feelings and experiences encountered throughout the study, which I found useful while analysing my data



(see examples of my field notes in appendix 8), in particular, because it helped refresh my memory on occasion.

### **5.7. Data coding and analysis**

In this section I discuss my approaches towards coding and analysing my data set. Before transcribing the recorded interviews collected for the main study, I listened to each interview a couple of times. This helped me when I started making the interview transcriptions as by then I felt comfortable and familiar with my data. The data analysis process started with the reading and the rereading of transcripts and field notes a number of times in order to become familiar with each text. As Smith et al. (1999) have suggested, each reading draws the researcher into new insights and provides him or her with new revelations. Hennink et al. (2011: 205) have called this process ‘immersion’ as it enables the researcher to discover, identify and understand their data more fully.

I started by applying Strauss and Corbin's (1990) method of open coding. As Strauss & Corbin (1998 :102) state, in qualitative research endeavours, the goal is to dismantle the data and arrange it into ‘discrete parts, [which are] closely examined and compared for similarities and differences’. I undertook my data coding manually using highlighter pens to start to see if there were patterns and clusters in the data set. This process involved making notes, highlighting comments, phrases and identifying issues (see sample transcript as appendix 9). The process entailed constant reference to my research questions. Miles and Huberman (1994:11) describe this process as ‘data reduction’, being the first stage of three concurrent flows of activity in the process of data analysis. They explain it as segmenting the whole data set into meaningful parts for analysis. This exercise of data reduction enabled me to maintain a focus and some control over my extensive data set. ‘Data display’, the second stage of the three tiers, is getting the information into organised chunks (Miles and Huberman, 1994:11), during which I was looking for similarities and differences in the collected slices of data as well as any points of tension.

Miles and Huberman (1994:11) propose ‘conclusion drawing/verification’ as the third stage in the examination of data. They argue that a careful analysis of the

codes will eventually give rise to emerging themes and sub-themes (Boyatzis, 1998) that can be drawn together into categories that might, in turn, give rise to links with concepts that are found within the literature. The exercise of open coding identified some of the core perceptions of the respondents, which I put together in order to probe the findings, themes and sub-themes in the data set (see code map at the end of the chapter for a list of key codes from the interview transcripts).

## **5.8. Ethical considerations**

Throughout my study, I took into account the British Educational Research Association's ethical guidelines (BERA, 2004), which advocate obtaining informed consent, ensuring there is no harm or risk to participants, establishing honesty and trust between the researcher and participants, and most of all, a guarantee regarding participants' privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Ethical approval was granted for this study, 'Exploring inclusive practice: A study of two mainstream private primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan', REP (EM)/08/09-70 – from the Kings College Research Ethics Committee for the period lasting from 14th May 2009 to 13th May 2012. However, it is important to state that even though ethical approval may have been obtained from the sponsor University, undertaking research ethically is an organic and ongoing process. Being an ethical researcher involves asking questions about respect for people, harm-reduction and moral conduct in all stages of the work including the writing up phase and subsequently (Brooks et al., 2014).

The consent form given to each participant explained that even if they agreed to take part in the study, they could withdraw any time without prejudice. In addition to this, the potential participants were also given an information sheet, which fully described the nature of the research and my commitment to erase the audio recorded interview files upon completion of the thesis. All transcripts were stored securely and I was the only person who had access to them. Participants who signed the consent form were also reassured verbally that I would not disclose their identity to anyone and they were reminded again of the purposes of the research, as had been explained previously in the consent form. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, I explained that when writing up the research, the

schools, teachers and the students would not be identifiable as they would only be referred to by pseudonyms.

At all times during the data collection process, I was aware that the subject matter was sensitive and that there were issues regarding power relations between myself as a researcher and my respondents that needed careful handling as these could impact on interviewees' responses. I acknowledge that my position could potentially leave room for intimidation due to several reasons. For example, I was granted access to the research sites through senior gatekeepers who were the school heads and I was known in Karachi education circles as I had been a university tutor. Coming from a foreign university carrying out a doctoral study could also be seen as intimidating. Considering the above mentioned factors, my participants being apprehensive to a certain extent, owing to my status, was unavoidable. As discussed in chapter 2, often the principal or the head teachers in private schools in Pakistan are the owners, so the salary of the teachers is being paid by them, posing as an added barrier regarding teachers giving honest opinions to a person considered as the head teacher's colleague or friend. However, I tried to address these issues by assuring my participants at the start of each interview that nothing they said would be discussed with any colleague and complete confidentiality would be maintained at all times.

On occasion, I felt that they were giving me the answer they thought I wanted to hear about their classroom practice rather than the facts. I tried to counter this, by rephrasing questions so as to probe further and also took field notes that I could reflect on later in conjunction with other evidence so as to uncover what was really happening. I was aware that some teachers might be concerned to maintain a positive account of the work of their school. I was also aware that some might have been worried that the head teacher might hear of any less positive comments. I made great effort to ensure that my participants were reassured and comfortable so that I could explore their perceptions and experiences.

## **5.9. Reflexivity**

One key aspect that has to be considered in planning and designing a research project relates to the need for continual reflexivity as the work proceeds. Mason

(2002:05) explains that reflexivity involves 'thinking critically about what you are doing and why'. Throughout the research process the researcher should be engaged in self-evaluation of their actions (Mason, 2002). The research process should be based on a self-questioning stance, whereby a researcher thinks critically about how they are engaged in their research, consciously working to explore and take account of their own assumptions. In my research work I tried to reflect on the possible ways that 'any bias would creep into my research study' (Snape & Spencer, 2003: 20), by focussing on identifying and exploring my assumptions and perceptions and questioning their influence on my research investigation. As a researcher I played multiple roles, for I was simultaneously the 'investigator, reporter and analyser' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 44) of the data I collected. It was my responsibility to give meaning to the experiences my respondents had shared during my study.

Lichtman (2010) points out that critical reflection should relate to the process of research as well as to the role of the researcher. I was conscious of how my personal background, culture, values and perceptions about special needs and inclusion could shape the line of inquiry (Creswell, 2014). That is, it was my interest and experience in the field over time that led me to the study and its topic in the first place. However, the use of qualitative methods kept me aware of how my behaviour might be influencing the research process, so I took great care not to become a focus of the enquiry as much as possible by keeping a low profile. I tried to maintain a non-biased perspective and endeavoured to take a neutral stance in the interview settings to allow the central focus to stay with the participant's beliefs and experiences (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

It is also important to bear in mind the position of power held by the researcher over the subjects of research (Burman, 1992). At all times during the data collection process, I was aware that the subject matter under discussion was relatively sensitive and I took great pains to avoid the respondents seeing me as a figure of authority so they would feel able to talk to me with candour. I did not get any impression of any objections from the teachers that they were being coerced into it. In fact, they all seemed honoured and proud in sharing their practices in their classrooms. In general the aim was to ensure that the research

and particularly the interview process took place in as equitable a manner as possible.

#### **5.10. Practical limitations encountered in the fieldwork**

During the course of my pilot in Karachi, I had encountered some unforeseen problems that were entirely out of my control. Notably, political disturbances meant that schools had to be closed down unexpectedly during some of the time when I was undertaking my pilot interviews. I was confronted with the same challenges in the field when I was carrying out my main data collection in Millennium and Centenary Schools for, as the political situation was turbulent, I had to rework my planned interview timetable. However, it is a tribute to both schools and my respondents that their interest in the research enabled the interviews to take place. For instance, as explained above, I had to conduct the first interview of the main study at the respondent's home, which was because of a complete city wide strike, thus forcing the schools and all businesses to close down.

One key challenge that has persisted during the course of my research has been the contrast in understandings and usages of various terms and terminologies in the context of Pakistan when compared with the international literature and northern hemisphere concepts (a matter also raised in Chapter 2). My positionality in the research process and my experience of being a teacher in Pakistan helped me in understanding the teachers' use of certain terms to identify CWSN. I sometimes had to change/or slightly rephrase the terms and concepts that I was using in the interviews and in informal conversations to ensure that I was communicating effectively with my participants. I have had to take account of these semantic dilemmas in the writing up of the themes that emerged from my coding and analysis of the data set.

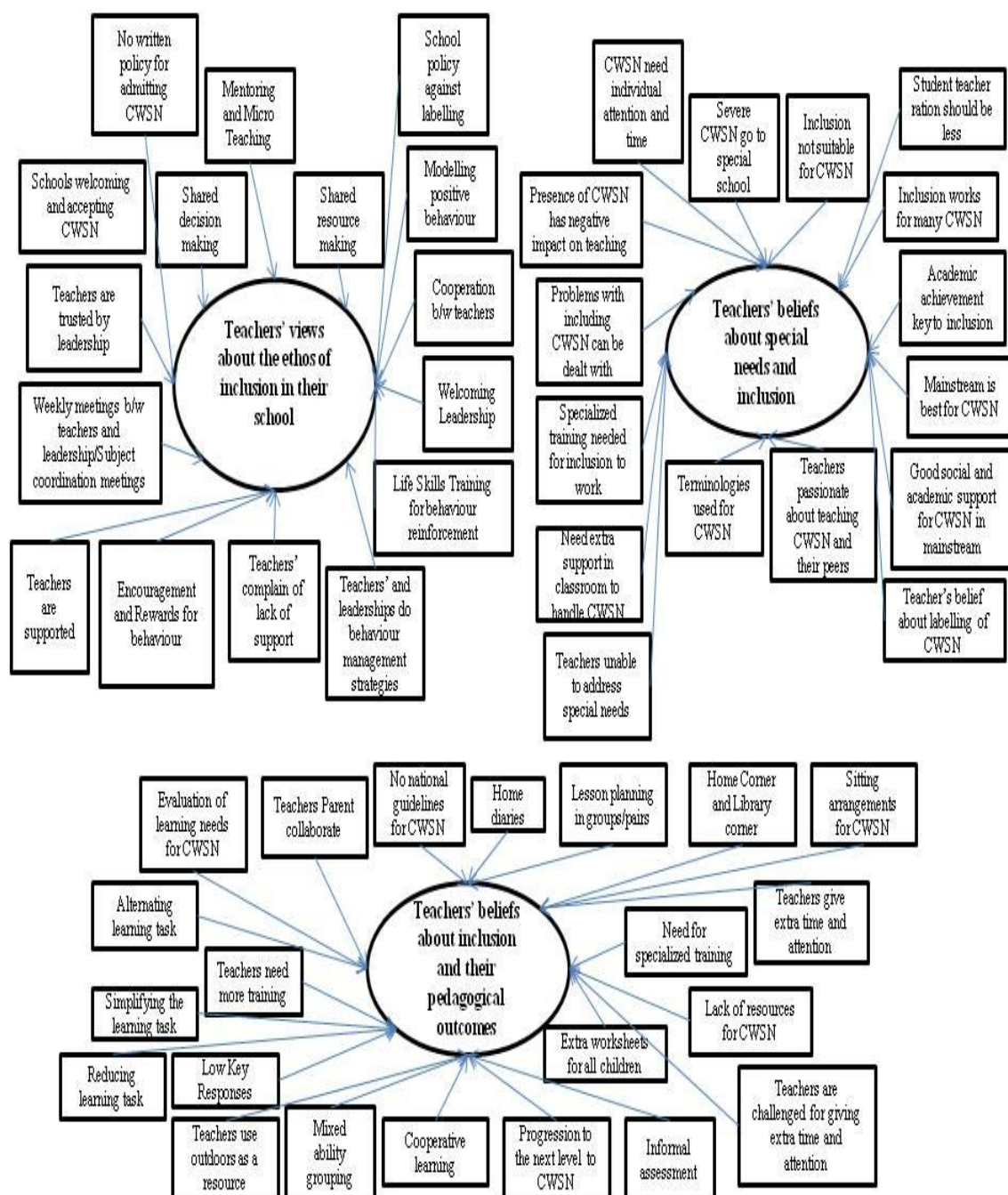
The frequent power breakdowns due to the energy crisis in Karachi, was often a constraint when I was undertaking back-to-back interviews and was unable to charge my recording devices. this problem occurred in the summer months of September and October, 2010 and because of the intense heat and continuous load-shedding, schools were compelled to use generators which, although giving

respite from the heat and perspiration, created loud noise. I had to make sure that the interview space had minimal disturbance from the extra audio sound, but at times it was not possible and much of my audio-recorded interviews had the background noise of the generator compelling me to listen to some of the interviews many times to get a clear understanding of what had been said.

### **5.11. Summary**

This chapter has outlined the design of my study and my epistemological and ontological perspective. I have set out my three core research questions and have provided descriptions of the two research sites and the participants. I have also discussed my data collection tools of background surveys, semi-structured interviews and field notes. In addition, the data coding and analysis procedure have been explained. Ethical considerations and the use of reflexive practice as well as some of the limitations I encountered during data collection have also been outlined in this chapter. I turn now to the first chapter of data analysis, which critically explores my participant teachers' views about the policies and practices in their schools aimed at promoting inclusion.

**Figure 5.1 Map: List of key codes and emerging themes from interview transcripts and field notes**



## **Chapter 6**

### **Teachers' views about the ethos of inclusion in their school**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the four most significant themes that emerged from the coding and analysis of my teacher respondents' perceptions and observations about their school's policies and practices in creating and promoting an ethos of inclusion. These four themes are not the only ones I identified in the interview data, but they are arguably the most relevant in terms of addressing the first research question of my study:

RQ 1) In what ways do teachers perceive that existing policies and practices promote inclusion in two mainstream private primary schools in Karachi?

My analysis is based on an understanding of school ethos as those values and beliefs that the school officially supports (Smith, 1998; Harris, 2001). The four themes discussed in this chapter are:

- School leadership role in promoting inclusion
- Support for teachers in creating and promoting inclusion
- Cooperation and teamwork amongst teachers in developing inclusive practices
- Behaviour management planning for inclusion of CWSN

The thesis draws on data elicited from the responses of 30 teachers taken from a set of semi-structured interviews, i.e. 15 teacher interviews from each of the two focal schools. During the interviews, the respondents from both schools talked at length about their beliefs, observations, experiences and practices in relation to special needs and inclusion. In what follows, I use illustrative quotes from the interviews relating to the main themes that emerged from my coding and analysis, the contents of which are subsequently compared with the extant literature, for each of the empirical chapters, i.e. Chapters 6 to 8. This chapter makes use of the



responses of 14 teacher respondents, 7 from Millennium and 7 from Centenary School (see table 6.1 and 6.2), as these participants' views most clearly illustrated the main coded themes. It is important to note that all the teachers that I interviewed spoke about their school's ethos in terms of its inclusiveness; in this chapter I intend to identify the themes that were consistently raised by my participants and will illustrate these themes by drawing on a subset of my data. In addition, in this chapter I will be drawing on data from my field notes (FN) taken from conversations with a specialist group of trainers from Centenary School, informal interactions as well as some of my observations at Millennium School. Under each coded theme I discuss how representative the selections are in relation to similarities and differences across the whole sample. Throughout this chapter, I argue that the policies and practices created, implemented and extended towards the various stakeholders, including CWSN, the teachers and parents combine to create (or limit, depending on the nature of the strategies deployed) an inclusive school ethos.

**Table 6.1 Millennium School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Hameeda (f)	English and science	10 years	Classes 3 - 8
2) Marium (f)	English and social studies	21 years	Classes 3 - 5
3) Umbreen (f)	English, maths and science	9 years	Classes 1 and 2
4) Shaista (f)	English, maths and science	4 years	Class 2
5) Sameen (f)	Urdu and Islamiat	10 years	Classes 3 and 4
6) Ghazal (f)	Urdu and Holy Quran recitation	19 years	Classes 3 and 4
7) Afsheen (f)	English reading	16 years	Class 2

**Table 6.2 Centenary School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Nausheen (f)	Urdu	18 years	Classes 1 and 2
2) Farzeen (f)	English, science maths and social studies	24 years	Class 3
3) Rakhshanda (f)	arts and crafts	2 years	Pre-nursery– Class 2
4) Shireen (f)	sports	10 years	Classes 1 - 7
5) Alina (f)	computing	11 years	KG – Class 6
6) Amal (f)	English, science, maths and social studies	1 ½ years	KG - Class 1
7) Faiza (f)	English, science, maths, social studies and journal writing	3 years	Class 2

## **6.2. The role of school leadership in promoting inclusion**

In this section, I consider teachers' views about their school leaderships' role in creating an environment to support the inclusion of CWSN. I look specifically at: school policies regarding admissions, whether the teachers perceive their leaders as being friendly and welcoming to them and to the students, the senior leadership's stance towards accepting CWSN, their policies regarding labelling, the various levels of support extended to parents of children with and without special needs and any shared decision making with the teachers that may take place in order to create and maintain an ethos of inclusion.

The leadership in Millennium School, in order of seniority, comprised the principal, vice principal, head teachers and coordinators, whilst at Centenary School there were three principals (for junior, primary and secondary) and three coordinators subordinate to them. In both schools, the head teachers and coordinators had direct contact with the teaching staff on a daily basis. Although the admissions policy in both schools did not explicitly promote or advertise for CWSN, their mission statements would appear to be conducive to catering for diverse learning needs. For example, Millennium's philosophy highlighted in their mission statements says that the school is:

A happy place to learn, Millennium world is part of the Millennium family which is a close knit community geared to inspire: Be the Change: to bring about positive attitudes and behaviours in the students! Vigorous: to strive! Do! Rise! (Taken from Millennium School website)

Centenary's website details their mission statement as follows and is far more obviously inclusive in its philosophy:

We pride ourselves as a group of active and committed learners who are determined to build a fair and compassionate society by leading the students to intellectual excellence and a strong character! Our Mission is to be a leading inclusive and culturally diverse school working to inspire and motivate children to develop their intellect, creativity and character to be able to grow into socially responsible global citizens. (Taken from Centenary School website)

It should be reiterated here that Millennium and Centenary are both private schools (see chapter 5). Hence, while their mission statements relate to schools being like families where all learners are embraced, these statements are also proposing achieving academic excellence as an important goal which has to be delivered for the whole student community.

Regarding the teachers' perspectives as to how their leaders treat them, Hameeda, a respondent from Millennium School shares that in the previous school where she worked principals were dominating and authoritarian people difficult to communicate with, but at Millennium:

When the principal [Dr. Farzana] confirmed my job, she stood up from her seat and she hugged me. That was so unusual from my previous experience and I felt great. I just thought yes this is the right place where I have come actually somehow maybe I am very sensitive and I feel that if

these relationships, this warmth is not there then you cannot survive in any kind of environment. (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Similar sentiments are put forward by Alina from Centenary School about her principal, and she mentions her attitude towards the students:

I have seen Nasima [principal], she is very friendly with the children. A child might come to her and ask her to fill his water bottle; she shares that kind of relationship with them. (Alina interview at CS 140910)

It is worth pointing out that in Pakistan, it is very unusual for a principal of a large school to have daily interactions with the children so this action of filling a water bottle is evidence of a more inclusive and child-centred approach. Marium at Millennium School says:

At Millennium School you get respect from your employer and your colleagues so this is a very friendly kind of environment here. It is like a second home for me. (Marium interview at MS\_211010)

According to nearly all the teachers that I spoke with in both schools, the leadership teams in the two institutions had a welcoming attitude towards their teachers and students alike. This welcoming attitude promoted by the leaders would appear to have encouraged the teachers to create an atmosphere where all the students were made to feel they belonged in the school, for as Shaista explains:

In every class at Millennium teachers make sure that no child is without a friend, especially the newcomers, we make sure that they are friends with at least one person. (Shaista interview at MS \_191010)

From what the teachers reported, the leaderships of the two schools were supportive of inclusion. Nausheen from Centenary School says with reference to this point:

The school has always given tremendous support when dealing with CWSN. They have always been cooperative. No doubt about it, especially with special needs. Nasima [principal] has always made a lot of effort in this regard. Presently, we have all been asked to provide a list of students who have special needs. How are we, as teachers, dealing with this or plan to and what is it that we require from the school leadership, like: resources, support, parental involvement etc. They have always organised meetings with the parents and any kind of help required has been given to us. (Nausheen interview at CS\_080910)

Shireen, a physical training teacher from Centenary School, points out that in her teaching career of 15 years where she had had the opportunity of working in various schools, she had not experienced any mainstream school providing inclusion:

In my entire teaching career I have seen special children only in this school. Nasima [principal] takes on special children which is a very good thing. (Shireen interview at CS 240910)

What these individual cases reflect is that the leadership in both schools were willing to enrol and accommodate CWSN, although this was not explicitly advertised and did not involve a particularly large number of children.

Another feature of a strong leadership role in the area of inclusion that was evident in both schools was that both had high profile policies against labelling and discrimination of CWSN. Alina, who was relatively new at Centenary and also new to dealing with such children, shares, *'coming to this school I, learnt that we should not label the children'* (Alina interview at CS\_140910). She added that the school's leadership had helped her to gain a positive perspective towards the idea of embracing difference and led her to shun the negative idea of labelling children. Similarly Farzeen reflects that at a senior level, there is knowledge of the children and their needs so that differences can be included and supported:

When I look back, I feel in the previous 15 yrs of my life, I came across so many students....Now if I have any problem the leadership is aware, they know, mostly the parents know it, of course not all parents. With the cooperation of the leadership and the parents I am sure we can deal with it. (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910)

In her interview, she elaborated on the need to avoid labelling children and spoke of the steer that came from the senior leadership in Centenary School:

It is the environment, because we are not supposed to point to anyone and say see this child is different and you are different. We don't do that, this is the school policy. The heads are also doing it, we are not kind of pointing and saying that is a different child so please stay away, I mean we are not doing that. (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910 )

Afsheen from Millennium shares an example when she discovered that a child in her class with special needs was being made fun of and was being called names. Afsheen said that she discussed what to do with the senior leaders in her school

and was supported in trying to tackle the difficulty in an inclusive manner so that all the children understood what was going on and what needed to happen.

So I talked to the whole group of children separately who were really causing the bother and then I talked to that child separately and finally I talked to the child's parents with the whole group and that is how the matter was resolved. (Afsheen interview MS\_081010)

What was evident in my interviews with teachers in both schools was that each school's leadership took seriously their responsibilities to ensure that the children really were being included and that difference and diversity were respected and understood. From what Farzeen, Alina and Afsheen say, both schools have clear policies against any labelling or stigmatisation of children with and without special needs. From what the teachers reported, it was evident that the leaderships' values and beliefs about inclusion had created an ethos and a code of ethics and behaviour from which their teachers drew strength and guidance. In the UK, Bennathan et al.'s (1996) study found that strong leadership and a positive school ethos were essential elements in developing and sustaining an inclusive institution. In Centenary and Millennium, the leaderships' mission of promoting inclusion not only worked within the school, but also involved reaching out to the parents of CWSN and other children's parents in order to sensitise the school community towards their school's inclusive philosophy. As Farzeen reflects in one case:

The parents didn't know... they were not aware of the fact that their child had some problem and at the same time when we shared the signs the child was exhibiting they were not willing to accept the fact that their child has a problem. (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910)

The parents in this particular situation as in many other cases had to be made aware of their child's special needs as a first step to creating an effective social and academic learning experience for their child. This example would seem to be anachronistic to people in the context of the UK or some other Western countries, where disability/special needs are usually identified at a much earlier stage before the child has entered elementary schools and where there are systems in place to help the parents understand and accept their child's diverse needs. It is important to remember (as I discussed in chapter 1 and 2), that disability is still quite a difficult or even taboo subject in Pakistan, where in many cases not even the

parents of a CWSN are willing to accept the situation and so address the child's needs. In such cases as that cited above, the culture and religious context of the schools have to be taken into account when identifying or accepting CWSN in these mainstream schools (Katsui, 2006: Tien, 2007).

Thus, it was imperative that the focal schools took the initiative in some cases of explaining the nature of the special need to the parents so that they could come to accept it and hence, play an active role in their future learning. In addition, teachers in Pakistani society have a high status, being seen as pillars of the community, and so often, they are put in the situation of having to take the lead in bringing to the fore issues that a community needs to address, such as special needs (Azad, 2005).

In terms of school leadership and promoting an ethos of inclusion, the majority of my respondents talked about the fact that their school leaders had to work not just with the parents of CWSN, but also had to create a dialogue with parents of children without special needs so that the school community more widely would understand the inclusive ethos of the school. Amal from Centenary School expresses, '*we have regular parent teacher meetings...it helps teachers as well as all parents to meet and discuss*' (Amal interview at CS\_09/09/10).

Salisbury & McGregor (2005) have pointed out that an effective journey towards inclusive schooling depends on the school leadership holding a belief that all children belong and should be part of the school community. According to Salisbury & McGregor (2005), inclusion demands high quality leadership, and a passion for inclusion as a way forward to provide better learning opportunities for all children, teachers and families. By including the students and the parents in the learning journey the two schools of my investigation would appear to have been trying to create what Wenger (1998) has described as 'communities of practice', where the teachers, students, parents and the larger community all become a part of the wider learning environment, in this case concerning inclusion.

Zollers et al.'s (1999) study supports the idea that a democratic approach by the school principal can promote an environment which makes teachers feel a part of

the decision-making. Hameeda says her school has always had a vision, a reason for doing things and there is regular sharing of this vision by the leaders with the teachers:

We are not kept in total darkness and things never come as a shock to us. This is what I really appreciate, because they (the leadership team) are not bound to share anything with us we are going to obey whatever they say, but still trusting their employees, trusting the people around them, trusting them with the responsibilities, I think that is something very important! (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Marium reaffirms Hameeda's views about the staff being taken into confidence in her school. She highlights how this is done in relation to new policies that the principal wants to introduce. She says these are:

Always discussed with Dr. Farzana [principal], during the morning sessions... Always the main points are brainstormed, discussed and then it takes the shape of a policy... I think their (the leadership's) vision is broader than ours and they have been proved right over time. (Marium interview at MS\_2110101)

The importance of the sort of consultation process that took place at Millennium School, where the teaching staff's involvement was tangibly appreciated was seen as useful for creating a high level of interdependence. This consultation was seen as essential in a study undertaken by Skrtic & Sailor (1996). Their investigation showed how individuals, on the basis of a consensus, had a voice in the decision-making in the organisation, that then led to better outcomes than had this consultation not taken place. Participants from Millennium School reported that all the teaching staff had a meeting with the principal for 15 minutes each morning, where issues, policies and plans were discussed and shared (FN\_MS\_151010). The morning meetings between the teachers and the principal at Millennium provided opportunities for teachers to express any concerns about children, especially CWSN.

My respondents reported that collaboration and consultations amongst the leadership and the teachers were common at Centenary School. Here the leadership and the management had weekly meetings with the teachers. The majority of the respondents pointed out that the school leadership maintained an



open door policy, which allowed the teachers to share and discuss their views as well as seek solutions to their problems.

The bottom line is they try and accommodate us in the best possible way. Nasima [principal] also tries to help us. Sometimes we go to her and seek her advice, because we are unable to help or bring an improvement in so and so child, then she comes up with her strategies and ideas. (Nausheen interview at CS\_080910)

Similarly, Farzeen states:

Basically, you know whatever problems I had, I used to go and talk to Rabia [principal]. She would give me advice also and at the same time she helped me a lot. (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910)

It would appear that there was an open door policy at Centenary that helped to create a learning atmosphere in which teachers' concerns would be listened to and addressed as a team.

Generally, in the case of schools in Pakistan such a consultative format is not the norm. Iffat from Millennium recalls her earlier school, *'there were sanctions in place by the leadership...'* (Iffat interview at MS\_121010). Mercy said at Centenary, *'we are consulted... given a free hand to teach, plan... it is active learning... whereas my son's school [private school] has rigid systems...'* (Mercy interview at CS\_160910). Often, private mainstream schools in Pakistan follow quite a rigid formal system of education, but there is growing awareness that traditional formats do not work well in the current complexity of schooling (Day et al. 2000). There is limited literature and research in Pakistan, however, a recent study by Rizvi (2008) has suggested that there has been a shift in thinking and practice from the traditional authoritarian and formal stance towards new perspectives, which involve a devolved and shared approach to leadership within the school. Rizvi (2008) found in her study on primary schools that the leaderships involved teachers in decision making and delegated authority amongst them.

To sum up, according to the teachers that I interviewed, the leadership in both schools had created an atmosphere of respect and inclusivity, by often providing support and encouragement to their staff on an ongoing basis, whilst valuing their input. The majority of the respondents from both schools reported in their

interviews that they felt included in the decision-making and policy-formulating process as each teacher was expected to be a contributing member to the development of inclusive practice. This way of working and leading the school is in line with the finding by Muijs and Harris (2003) that consultation is necessary if there is to be teaching staff's engagement in the mission at hand. They assert that any imposition of decisions is unproductive, as inclusion cannot be imposed and it is better developed in a democratic fashion since any school reforms need to be implemented by the staff themselves.

However, at this stage in the analysis it is important to discuss these findings in relation to the context in which they have been reported. As I have already written, most schools in Pakistan do not highlight inclusion in their mission and vision for themselves. Thus, these two schools are somewhat unusual. Second, in Pakistan, it is common for school principals to be the owners and founders of their schools. Thus, it can sometimes be the case that teachers are used to implementing what they are directed to do by the school leaders. Third, it can sometimes be the case that teachers may feel less free to voice their views to a researcher-outsider who they may see as aligned with the senior leaders/owners of the school who granted access to their schools. In relation to the findings that I have reported in this section, these meetings did indeed take place and they were free and open discussions about school policy and practice. Indeed, two of my respondents highlighted how much they valued the dialogue as it had not been part of the practice in their former schools. Moreover, evidence came to light that the leaderships and the teachers in both schools proactively tried to involve parents in their children's education as well as informing them about particular needs that may have previously been overlooked.

### **6.3. Support for teachers in creating and promoting inclusion**

A second dominant theme that was identified from coding and analysing my interview transcripts related to the support being offered to the teachers at Millennium and Centenary Schools in order to promote the inclusion of CWSN. More specifically, here I focus on two core elements of this theme: the trusting relationships that were formed with the teachers and the levels of support for teachers to bring innovation into their teaching practice. The majority of the

teachers interviewed, with the exception of four (one from Millennium and three from Centenary), spoke positively about the kinds of support they were being given. In what follows, detailed examples of this support are provided along with some contributions by those teachers who were somewhat critical of the assistance they received when faced with the new challenges.

With regards to the nature of the support received from the leadership, Hameeda from Millennium School says: *‘They are there with us, but they don’t bother us’* (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010). She elaborates:

I feel that this shows that they (the management) trust us, they don’t interfere, they don’t call us and ask for individual students, but they are with us whenever we need attention or need their cooperation in any area, they are there. (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Umbreen who performs the dual roles of a primary teacher and coordinator explains how she was given a more direct form of support to take up a two year MEd (masters in education) from AKU-IED<sup>2</sup>, for which she was sponsored by the school.

Dr. Farzana [principal] has her own way of convincing people...., I did not say yes right away as I had to consult my family.... It was a privilege to be selected; I was considering that as well... On the school front Ghazal [coordinator] was very coaxing, supportive encouraging as well as Mrs Noorani [Vice Principal], as they wanted me to go for the course. So I finally decided on going and doing the course. (Umbreen interview at MS\_221010)

Umbreen goes on to explain how after her master’s programme, she was promoted to coordinator on her return to the school and now provided support and assistance to all the teachers she is responsible for. She gives an example:

There is a substitute teacher who is very raw and needs our assistance almost all the time, so most of the time I am with her and I am also substituting for teachers who are absent. Sometimes the new teachers want a model where somebody teaches and they sit and observe. Yesterday, I did that in grade two.... (Umbreen interview at MS\_221010)

She also believes in inclusion and suggests:

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<sup>2</sup> Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development. A teacher training institution in Karachi, running under the Aga Khan Foundation.

I would support my teachers in a way.... For them to find out ways to teach all children with the conviction that all children will learn. If they have that conviction then they will go a mile ahead and make those strategies, think about it, reflect upon them and improve them. (Umbreen interview at MS\_221010)

Umbreen reported that support and guidance was offered at the school level, not only for novice teachers, but also for those with substantial numbers of years of service. Teachers were frequently supported and guided in their exploration and discovery of ways to support learning diversities in their classrooms based on a conviction that all children can learn when given the right opportunities, whilst keeping in view their different learning needs. As Umbreen pointed out, the school leadership encourages teachers to go through the processes of review and reflection on their teaching pedagogies in order to improve on them in their classrooms.

Urdu teacher Sameen's experience chimes with this perspective of support for staff being ongoing, explaining how she felt when she received useful input in her earlier days at Millennium School as well as at the time of the interview, when her coordinator was encouraging her to try out various new strategies she had devised for her lessons. Sameen said that her own idea was to use kindergarten books for class 1 so as to enable the students to revise their earlier learning and she was being supported in this. She also volunteered that this pattern of support had been evident throughout her ten years of teaching at Millennium School. She expresses her satisfaction with her present coordinator, who allows her to use a range of techniques, which:

I find would benefit my children. They have full faith in me that whatever I do is aimed at assisting children who are struggling and lifting them up rather than letting them fall down. They have never put any kind of limitations on me I am free to do this. (Sameen interview at MS\_181010)

Sameen suggests that her concerns about some of the children who were struggling in her class were understood and that she was encouraged to try out strategies to include and give more opportunities to these students. It would appear that the Millennium leadership was striving to maintain consistency in not only giving support to their teachers, but also giving them confidence to be innovative in their teaching and learning.

However, Ghazal, another Urdu and Quran recitation teacher at Millennium had a different experience to share:

I was told to observe another senior teacher who takes Urdu... she has been teaching class 3 Urdu for 10 years....I saw she wrote on the board... asked the students to do writing... frankly speaking I feel students do not learn with writing so much... I do not feel comfortable giving lots of writing... I myself feel fed up with too much writing so I just leave it and do something else. Such small children shouldn't be given too much writing... I was thinking of doing short role plays, but I cannot... I am bound to follow the routine. (Ghazal interview at MS\_ 131010)

Ghazal had started her teaching career in Millennium school, which she left after two years and she had recently re-joined the staff. Her teaching career spanned nearly 20 years, but she felt she was not being supported nor encouraged to innovate and bring in her own styles of active learning and teaching for her subject. During her interview, she indicated that she had lost some of her confidence, because she felt that she wasn't trusted to try out her own teaching style. Furthermore, she reported feeling under pressure regarding the confirmation of her post being extended (a probation period of three months), which was also having adverse effects on her classroom teaching and concentration.

These contrasting opinions suggest that the leadership may not have had a uniform approach of trust; some teachers were given a free hand to try out some innovations, and others appear to have been denied this freedom and were required to follow in the footsteps of their more senior colleagues. It is difficult to speculate about this dissonance. However, it may be that more established teachers in both schools know how far they can go and are less likely to criticise their line managers or senior leaders (employers). Perhaps the different levels of leeway for staff to bring in their own innovation stemmed from the Millennium leadership's aim to maintain high academic standards whilst also being inclusive. That is, because Ghazal was still in her probationary period she was expected to demonstrate that her practice was of a sufficient standard before being accepted as a full member of staff when she would be allowed more freedom to try out new ideas. This could be why there were many supportive comments from teachers about their leaders.

The teaching strategy suggested by Ghazal has been supported by research that argues that writing should be more for self-expression and rote learning should be replaced by activity based learning at the elementary stages as learning through these means becomes more advantageous for all children in an inclusive classroom (Graham et al, 2002; Berry, 2006). However, it remains unclear as to why Ghazal was not allowed to pursue her preferred teaching style, given that other teachers were allegedly encouraged to innovate by the school leadership. It may be that innovation was only encouraged and permitted if it were incremental rather than radical in any ways. After all, both schools are ultimately a business concern and have to attract new intakes from the local community.

However, Shireen, a sports teacher at Centenary School, talks about how she has felt trusted and supported in bringing innovations to sports teaching to cater for diverse groups of pupils with different abilities:

I introduced documentation or written plans as before me the lesson plans for sports classes were not in a written format.....I have gotten a very good response, a very respectable one. (Shireen interview at CS\_240910)

Similarly, Nausheen also from Centenary reports that, '*the school has always given tremendous support when dealing with CWSN*'. She further elaborates:

If I need extra time with a child with special needs in the morning as the timing is suitable for me, then the school would ask the parents to leave the child a bit earlier before school time or some children have their siblings in junior school and hence, they stay till late so then the school would ask them to stay back for half an hour after school. (Nausheen interview at CS\_080910)

Similar to Millennium, some of the Centenary teachers interviewed reported that they had been guided and supported by their leadership team. Shireen, a new teacher, felt she was encouraged, supported and respected for bringing in constructive changes to the old teaching patterns. Backup and cooperation by means of assistance in planning lessons, provision of resources or parental involvement was often taken as the norm at Centenary, where the leadership was proactive in organising and coordinating effective ways for teachers, students and parents to manage their time proficiently to maximise the students' learning. Alina comments:

I feel we are like a family, it feels like a big house with children. You don't have the fear or strict environment of most schools. (Alina interview at CS\_140910)

In contrast, when recounting their views about being informed by the school leadership, Amal said, '*I was not told*' (Amal interview at CS\_090910) by the leadership of the presence of CWSN in my classroom. Her colleagues Rakhshanda and Faiza also said that they went through similar experiences and explained that they identified these special needs themselves and it was only later that the leadership stepped in to support them. These accounts from my participants present a less positive version of the leadership in relation to the exchange of information regarding the presence of CWSN and how teachers would be supported through this journey of inclusion. However, whilst some types of disability are clearly apparent, such as visual or physical impairment, conditions like dyslexia or dysgraphia are often hidden and difficult to identify, which can explain why they may not be known about until the children concerned are participating in lessons (Dyson & Millward, 2000). Thus, it could be the case that the leadership in Centenary was unaware that the children highlighted by the aforementioned teachers required extra support until they were informed about the situation by these teachers.

Teachers, when they are supported by teaching assistants or being provided with specialised classroom resources, such as audio-visual aids, computers, smaller class sizes and time for planning, are in a much better position to perform and carry out any reforms proposed by their leadership (Avramidis et al., 2000). The majority of my participants reported that often such provision was available for teachers at Millennium and Centenary, which enhanced their working capacities and motivated them to take on the challenges of inclusion. However, although adequate support to deal with CWSN appeared to be the norm at Centenary, from the data analysed, some teachers had contrasting experiences to report. Nausheen, who taught class 2, complains:

Now every class has 20-25 children, class 2 has 32 and sometimes I do not have a helper or assistant, so it is difficult to manage. (Nausheen interview at CS\_080910)

In addition, Rakhshanda, the art teacher at Centenary, who often had to take on the role of a substitute teacher, comments that in the absence of a proper art room and often no helper, the difficulties of having to take classes with a wide range of abilities including CWSN took its toll:

In smaller classes the teacher is there to assist, whereas in class 1 and 2, I am the one handling them ... students have to change into art clothes... so they hardly get time to finish the task... the class strength is large then it is a problem to give individual attention... especially when I do not get a break for the whole day... it is the last class... the children get hyper... I do not know how to control... (Rakhshanda interview CS\_220910)

The absence of additional staff was inhibiting Nausheen and Rakhshanda's ability to cater for the diverse learning needs in their classroom. A lack of additional support in the classroom has been cited as one of the key challenges faced by teachers when trying to implement inclusion in the UK (McLeskey & Waldron, 2000). The same is true in the case of Pakistan.

Inclusion has been identified as one of the most complex changes to effect in the field of education, requiring careful thought and preparation (Fullan, 1991; Kavale & Forness, 2000). That is, it cannot be implemented unless the groundwork has been done in providing support to teachers who are key participants in the process (Kavale & Forness, 2000). Daniel & King (1997) stressed that regular classroom teachers in an inclusive setting often face the challenge of catering for a diverse group of learners without adequate support and knowledge and lack of this can weaken a teacher's confidence in providing for special needs in their classrooms, as was evident from what some of my participants had to say.

#### **6.4. Cooperation and team work amongst teachers in developing inclusive practices**

A third key theme that many participants spoke about was the way in which cooperation and team work in their schools helped them to become more inclusive. They emphasised five aspects of cooperation: its importance; sharing through resource making and ideas; mentoring and micro teaching; subject coordination meetings and problem sharing. An example of this cooperation was visible when Hameeda (FN\_111010) exchanged places for our interview with a



colleague of hers who had a commitment with another school activity, although by doing this she had to give up her resource time. She further adds:

Alhamdulillah [God's blessings] cooperation is there in the whole school, but I feel in juniors [junior section comprising of grades 3-6] it is the most! (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Hameeda took great pride in the cooperative environment where she worked and her giving away her resource time and accommodating me are examples of the cooperation that is prevalent in her section of the school. Her voluntary gesture shows the level of cooperation amongst the teachers, where they readily supported and facilitated each other. Hameeda's action relates well to the example from Hehir & Katzman's (2012) study, where teachers' supporting each other was taken as good practice that promoted an atmosphere such that they felt they were not working in a 'void' (Hehir & Katzman, 2012: 84). Such cooperation and flexibility among staff would thus appear to be an important element of the inclusion process in Millennium School.

Reflecting on making resources for their classroom teaching, Marium comments that '*we do make them together*' (Marium interview at MS\_211010). Teachers were contributing towards joint learning materials production enabling them to economise on their time as well as gaining from this mutual exercise. Marium, who was a senior teacher at Millennium with 15 years of teaching experience, talks about assisting the less experienced and new teachers, stressing that she and her colleagues reach out to them:

Personally the things that fall under my sphere, I really try and help them in those areas. As for my senior colleagues, we are always there to give them good advice, take them towards some proactive thinking. They come up with their problems any way... how to deal with CWSN... We do facilitate, always willing to facilitate. (Marium interview at MS\_211010)

The senior and more experienced teachers, thus, were acting as mentors for the less experienced ones and were always willing to listen to their problems and suggest solutions. That is, Marium and other senior teachers like her tried to fill in the knowledge and experience gaps of the more junior staff. This behaviour has been identified as a form of mentoring by Krupp (1985), a process which is necessary for increasing the morale and capability of teachers. A healthy morale,

such as that described by Krupp, helps teachers to gain satisfaction from their work and leads them towards successful accomplishing of their goals. The focus of these practices of sharing and mentoring at Millennium was to assist all teachers in dealing with CWSN in an effective manner.

Apart from regular discussions and exchanges amongst the new and the experienced teaching staff at Millennium, there were micro-teaching sessions, which were seen as a platform where teachers shared their knowledge in order to promote better teaching skills and strategies in order to ensure that inclusion was foregrounded. Umbreen, a teacher and coordinator at Millennium, explained that these sessions take place when teachers are about to start a new learning topic and were often apprehensive about it and wanted to go through it before introducing it in their classrooms. These sessions are also conducted when teachers are very good at something or have an expertise that they wanted or were asked to share with their colleagues. These sessions only last about 10 minutes with the teachers splitting into two groups, students and observers, with particular emphasis being placed on whether all pupils, including CWSN, will benefit from the mode and content of the delivery:

After the lesson is over the observers critique your lesson... the teachers are supposed to improve... Also teachers are asked to go in their classrooms with an open mind and not to have bias... You have to take it very open heartedly and whatever critique is coming your way, it is for your improvement. It should not be taken personally; focus is on the teaching strategy that needs improvement. (Umbreen interview at MS\_221010)

Micro-teaching gives the teachers a chance to exhibit their teaching style in front of their peers and the feedback provided can help bring about an improvement in their delivery. Further, it is seen as an ongoing exercise of producing and refining teaching and learning techniques, especially inclusive strategies, which Udvari-Solner and Thousand (1995) contended is an effective way of catering for all students, including CWSN, in mainstream classrooms.

Subject coordination committees are another form of teacher collaboration that are provided at Millennium, according to Mariam, where issues concerning teaching pedagogies regarding inclusion of CWSN are openly discussed:

I can share that my children have not understood this concept, so can we do it again? Or in another way and the ideas are discussed... and this is very good learning. Even new teachers who have joined our school have brilliant ideas we do learn from them, we are all free to talk. (Marium interview at MS\_211010)

Teachers from Centenary School gave corresponding accounts of teamwork and cooperation as in the example from Alina, who, when new to dealing with CWSN, sought the cooperation of a remedial teacher by observing her take classes with CWSN. She shares:

I learnt a lot from this observation, it helped me understand special needs and the various strategies I could apply when dealing with them. (Alina interview at CS\_140910)

Opportunities for observing her colleague assisted Alina in several ways as it gave her more knowledge about special needs and she learned ways to address these in her own teaching. Furthermore, the observation helped her to add to her spectrum of strategies that could be applied in her computer classroom when addressing diversity. Shireen, the sports teacher at Centenary and her male counterpart collaborated together as well as with their colleagues:

We go through a process of checking and observing the children several times before coming to any decision. As there can be several reasons for their disinterest, we discuss it with their teachers and amongst ourselves. (Shireen interview at CS\_240910)

To explain this collaboration, she offers another example of a CWSN who even after several explanations about the need for class participation would cry during the sports class, so as a team:

We decided that Omar (male sports teacher) would have her in his group and deal with her, as at times dealing with the opposite sex works. So she cried in the first race but cried little less for the second one, which was a sign that interest was developing. So the switch over worked! (Shireen interview at CS\_240910)

The small steps taken by colleagues at Centenary, like the active collaboration and problem sharing in Shireen's sports class between her and her colleague, helped resolve some learning and behaviour issues, which if ignored and not settled might have been a limiting factor in the child's learning and performance.

To summarise, teachers interviewed at Millennium and Centenary Schools understood the need for sharing and collaboration as they could not perceive being able to surmount all the challenges in implementing inclusion without the help and support from their peers. The staff at both the institutions said that they assisted each other in resource and material-making for their teaching and learning. The ethos of the two schools supported this kind of interdependence, as it was felt that no one teacher was responsible for any one student; rather, together, all the teachers were responsible for the education of all the students (Hehir & Katzman, 2012). In addition, teachers at the Millennium and Centenary Schools did not work in a void, but as a team and generally, whenever there was a problem they were supported by their colleagues. Further, the interviewed teachers reflected how sharing had helped them to work through some of the challenges of inclusion, whilst at the same time helping them to gain confidence through the positive achievements of their pupils, especially CWSN. Hehir & Keitzman (2012) have posited that effective practices in school often develop on the basis of people having strong relationships. These relationships, according to them, basically revolve around their work.

### **6.5. Behaviour management planning for the inclusion of CWSN**

In this last section of my analysis in relation to teachers' views about their school ethos, I consider issues related to behaviour management and the ethos of inclusion in the two schools. To begin with, it is generally accepted that all schools as a basic requirement of good schooling will have programmes, plans and policies for behaviour management (Caldwell & Spinks, 2005). However at Millennium and Centenary Schools, because their intake includes children who have recognised behavioural management difficulties, such as autism, hyperactivity or attention deficit disorders, in these cases, particular care and sensitivity needs to be taken when working with such special needs. In this section when I talk about behaviour management I focus on those aspects that relate to the inclusion of CWSN. The core elements that I address in this theme are: encouragement and appreciation, life skills training, modelling positive and inclusive behaviour, and the influence of rewards on the social and emotional behaviours of children.

Teachers interviewed at Centenary used various behaviour managing strategies to promote the inclusion of CWSN. Alina talks about one CWSN in her class and the need to be pro-active in helping him to settle down:

Sometimes the sounds would make him agitated and uncomfortable when he used to come for my computer class and I used to play an educational game with him, it was very colourful he liked that a lot. It had a calming effect on him. (Alina interview at CS\_140910)

She added how some children sometimes excluded different children and talked of what she did to combat this challenge. One of her tactics was to focus on one child's talent with computers:

So I used to bring that out in the class and encouraged and appreciated him a lot. This is how that big group got disintegrated and children were happier and accepting each other in a better way. Then, there was one child who was not very good with computers, but very good at writing English poems. Once he shared his poem with me and I shared his poem with the whole class and they appreciated him a lot! Children got attracted to this child and started moving towards him (Alina interview at CS\_140910)

In these two, cases Alina understood her students' strengths and the areas where they needed more guidance. She gave more time, appreciation and encouragement to the students who appeared to be isolated from the main body of the class. Her classroom strategies of appreciation and encouragement regarding the efforts put in by her students and especially regarding CWSN, helped in altering the behaviour of other children in a positive way as well as in inclusion practices.

Farzeen provided an example of a CWSN who had issues with concentration and showed disinterest in the learning activities of the class. She explained how gradually giving him opportunities during lessons, altered his attitude as well as boosted his confidence level to the extent that:

This year we had this Qiraat [recitation of the Holy Quran] and Naat [poetry that praises Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)] competition and he participated in it and the Naat that he recited was excellent. It was excellent... I really liked it... more so because that child is showing some interest. (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910)

The two above examples contributed by Alina and Farzeen show how their students' behaviour was altered in a positive direction when they were praised for

their efforts. Moreover, the encouragement and praise given in front of their peers motivated them to put in more effort to perform socially and academically. Openly recognising their efforts and lauding their achievements in front of their peers and the whole school, worked well towards creating an atmosphere of mutual respect where all the students were learning to accept and appreciate learning differences.

A 'life skills training programme' at Centenary School (FN at CS\_280910) was started as a result of the school's endeavour to encourage all students, regardless of their learning needs, to take up skills which would not only help improve their confidence, but also promote cooperative behaviour. Specifically, courses in taekwondo, pottery-making, roller-skating and drama were offered to grades 3-6 during school hours and it was mandatory for all the children to take part in at least one of them. All the skills were taught by professionals from the respective fields. In the city of Karachi, where this school is located, many children do not have the opportunity to learn these skills and especially not from professionals. The four trainers teaching these courses provided input on how they engaged children with and without special needs in the various activities.

Here, the taekwondo trainer explains how the underlying ethos of his sport can translate into meaningful interpretations for all students and specifically CWSN to apply in their everyday lives:

It develops self confidence in the individual that what I can do not everyone can do...everything is not about winning or losing... *'I am basically not training myself to compete with others, I am competing with myself, taking into account my own weaknesses and shortcomings...how to overcome them and becoming strong....it's a wide world and we have to prepare ourselves'.....* Also, in taekwondo aggressive behaviour gets redirected and so we do not react in a negative way, but respond constructively towards those children exhibiting aggression. It teaches respect and discipline. (FN at CS\_280910)

The trainer here implies that the focus is not primarily about competing with each other, but rather, such activity concentrates on individual progress and consequently, often CWSN can flourish in the mainstream as they can feel valued.

The theatre teacher reflects on how through learning drama and acting, *'self confidence and self-esteem certainly get elevated through theatre... hidden skills are identified'* (FN at CS\_280910). Moreover, pottery and clay work lead towards, *'developing a positive form of interaction and activity beyond the classroom'* (FN at CS\_280910). The trainer teaching skating was of the view that learning to skate brings:

All the learners together as regardless of their needs they got opportunities through this sport to learn and enjoy and we can see the beneficial role it plays when there is a visible change in their social and emotional behaviour. (FN at \_CS\_ 280910)

These extracurricular activities would appear to have given all the children, with or without special needs, opportunities to participate in beyond the formal classroom learning situations so as to improve on their self-assurance and enhance their self-image in a positive way.

Farzeen held the opinion that any child who is interested in any field should be encouraged in that area. She reflects on an example of a CWSN from her class who was good at games, felt happy while playing and usually was the winner in some sports like racing:

Later on I found he was interested in extracurricular activities like drama and acting and all this. So I feel that was going side by side, it was having a good impact on his academic skills... (Farzeen interview at CS\_060910)

Similarly Shireen, a sports teacher at Centenary, explained that she and her colleague provide pictures (of different emotions and actions) to a particular CWSN who has severe issues with concentration, so he can identify the present feelings he is encountering:

We go along with it and do not force him to anything if he doesn't want to. At times he has done races with Omar [male sports teacher]. He took part in relay race also with batons and has also played cricket as a batsman. (Shireen interview at CS\_240910)

These examples from the classroom teachers and the life skills trainers can be taken as evidence of how mainstream classroom practices as well as the opportunity to learn various skills beyond the classroom helped in redirecting students' behaviours. According to my participants, the children became more

accepting of their peers with special needs when their achievements were encouraged and shown to others. Further, learning skills beyond their classroom environment gave the children not just a sense of pleasure, but also created a sense of achievement, which elevated their self esteem and boosted their confidence. Heightened self-esteem and increased self-confidence played a powerful role, according to the theatre instructor, in minimising and at times eliminating negative behaviours. In sum, all the students, including CWSNs were able to show and command respect through learning these various skills outside the formal classroom.

However, despite strenuous efforts to involve all the students in these life skill sessions to enhance self-esteem and inclusion, I was told by my respondents about instances where this had not been successful. For instance, Farzeen, a teacher at Centenary School said that she had a student who was diagnosed as being autistic and she felt that she had often failed to cater for his diverse needs and regular mood swings. This situation eventually compelled the senior staff to make a decision to reduce his school hours in order to minimise the disruption caused by his behaviour, which may well not have been in the best interests of the child. Slee (1995a) has pointed out that schools that are seeking to be more inclusive, often experience increasing numbers of students that are identified as having behaviour issues, which some teachers feel helpless to address. Such situations, he asserts, put pressure on the school leadership to make alternative provision for these students outside of the mainstream classrooms, through reduction in attendance hours or by having the children removed from the school. Quite clearly, senior staff in schools wishing to embrace inclusion, as was the case at Centenary, need to reflect upon and amend their exclusion policy on an ongoing basis so as to not come to see this as an easy option when faced with challenging behaviours.

According to some participants from Millennium modelling positive behaviour through promoting Islamic values was also a core strategy undertaken at the school to promote inclusion. Sameen, teacher at Millennium School elaborates on this strategy:



We talk to them coming back to Islamic values, rights of others, taking care of each other, and life style of Our Prophet (peace be upon him). This is how we have to deal with children's minds which are blank slates, they do listen, try to understand and attempt to follow the teachings. (Sameen interview at MS\_181010)

The vast majority of the respondents said that talking and enforcing positive Islamic values as well as speaking the truth, respecting everyone and sharing were considered to be the expected behavioural norm in both schools. Further, teachers at both schools strongly encouraged students to share their ideas with each other, including CWSN, and made this exercise a compulsory practice in and outside their classrooms. The modelling of positive behaviour, according to Cole (1998), can lead to these behaviour patterns being adopted by students, as they copy what is visible around them (Montgomery, 1989). Clearly, there is some evidence of this happening in the two focal schools.

Many of respondents indicated that they used appreciation and reward as key motivators to assist the children to achieve their learning targets. Hameeda identified the need for patience so as to build confidence and cited an example of a CWSN who had difficulty reading, but gradually overcame his problem as the whole class was made to wait patiently for him:

He was given that confidence nobody was laughing at him, he was given time to decode the word first and then speak. (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Sameen told of how one student who had poor vision and was slow in responding, was rewarded with stars from her when his work was good. She believed that, *'these stars and happy faces work as a tonic for class 3 students'* (Sameen interview at MS\_181010). That is, positive reinforcement in the form of stars gave this CWSN motivation for good performance. Umbreen also saw the value of stars, stickers and tickets, *'you see these are young children and they are motivated by extrinsic motivation, with things like stars, stickers, tickets'* (Umbreen interview at MS\_221010). If children's positive behaviours are being reinforced in this way, it is important to ensure that they get rewarded when they have made individual improvements (Witzel & Mercer, 2003). Some of the teachers interviewed explained that these rewards were given based on the individual improvements each child made: based on the child's own parameters

of learning and achievements, meaning there was no standard performance target for all children, but rather, the emphasis was placed on individual progress.

My respondents considered that these positive reinforcements served to progress learning and pupil motivation in both the schools. These extrinsic rewards gave some CWSN a push towards better behaviour and performance. My respondents believed that little innovations like these made learning difficult subjects interesting and manageable. Most importantly, teachers felt that these rewards influenced other children in the class to act in a similar fashion and engage more studiously in the lessons. Millennium and Centenary Schools used the appreciation and reward strategy in the playground and at break times, which involved handing out tickets that demonstrated that the children were exhibiting good social behaviour. This activity, as the teachers explained, also acted as a motivator for the other students to follow suit. Hence, according to my respondents, both schools were engaged through the various behaviour modification strategies in what researchers (McMaster, 1982; Montgomery, 1989; Cooper et al., 1994) have described as effective ways of strengthening that which is desired. As a result it is likely that the negative patterns were being challenged and providing pupils positive alternatives, which were helpful in creating and developing an inclusive school ethos. However, it does have to be recognised that for some children extrinsic motivators like stickers and stars only work for some of the time. Some children, for example those with the spectrum condition of autism, may simply not respond at all to these sorts of inducements.

## **6.6. Summary and discussion**

This chapter has explored teachers' views about the school ethos that their leadership teams were promoting in relation to inclusion. The ways in which the ethos of inclusion was perceived by the participant teachers has been explored and some points of critical tension have been highlighted.

From my coding and analysis of the data that I obtained from thirty interviews with a variety of teachers in both schools, it was evident that the majority of the teachers were able to identify an ethos of inclusion that was spearheaded by their school leaders. In this chapter I have concentrated on the four themes that were most

commonly reported. First, the role of the leadership teams in relation to promoting inclusion was identified and it emerged that although there was a positive attitude towards catering for all children's needs there were some points of tension. Not least, there was a tension between these two private schools' leaderships desire to pursue excellence, as illustrated in their mission statements, and the degree to which they could provide sufficient input for CWSN so as give them meaningful learning experiences without compromising that of others.

Second, with regards to supporting teachers working with CWSN in their mainstream classrooms, a substantial number of the respondents from Millennium and Centenary spoke warmly of the input they received from the senior staff. However, a few commented that they did not feel sufficiently assisted to work effectively in this way: some teachers pointed out that they were not always informed that a student with special needs was going to attend their class prior to the event. Moreover, a minority of the interviewees reported that they had been the ones who identified the need after working with a particular child rather than this being achieved by the school leaders, whose job they felt it should have been.

Third, the leaderships of the two schools tasked other senior staff with supporting those less experienced in working in an inclusive environment. This was accomplished through such processes as sharing resources, micro teaching events and subject coordination meetings amongst staff. Several respondents commented that these collaborative activities helped them to gain confidence in working with CWSN and hence, tackling the challenges of inclusion in mainstream classrooms with less trepidation.

Fourth, the evidence from the interview data suggests that the behaviour management strategies employed by the two schools to promote positive behaviour patterns allowed CWSN to feel they belonged. Regarding which, it was reported how challenging those without disability to check unacceptable behaviour towards CWSN on an ongoing basis created an atmosphere of mutual respect.

In addition, CWSN were rewarded for good behaviour, which reinforced this practice and also positively impacted on their self esteem. However, in at least

one case at Centenary school it was reported that the attempts to manage the behaviour of one autistic child failed and he had to have his contact hours reduced so as to minimise any disruption. Clearly, this brings to the fore the issue regarding the degree to which CWSN can be accommodated without compromising the pursuit of excellence goal set out in the two focal schools' mission statements. These matters are revisited in chapter 9.

In the next chapter, teachers' beliefs with regards to the inclusion of CWSN in mainstream classrooms and other related matters are investigated.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Teachers Beliefs about Special Needs and Inclusion**

#### **7.1. Introduction**

In chapter four, I examined the literature that considered the role played by teachers' beliefs in relation to the enactment of inclusive practices (Avramidis et al., 2000; Lambe & Bones, 2007). Drawing on this literature, this chapter critically considers the beliefs of my teacher respondents at Millennium and Centenary about special needs and inclusion. My coding and analysis of the interviews (see code map in chapter 5) revealed that the teachers held a range of different views about the appropriateness of educational institutions for CWSN and their beliefs also differed when they considered the effectiveness of inclusion in mainstream schools. During the interviews, some teachers reflected on how their beliefs had changed through their experiences of working with CWSN. The teachers used different terms and expressions when they talked about their beliefs and this point is also discussed in this chapter.

Three significant themes emerged from the coding and analysis of the interview data:

- Teachers' sets of beliefs about inclusion involving CWSN
- Teachers views about how having CWSN in their classrooms has influenced their practice
- Terminology used and the extent to which this does or does not reflect teachers' beliefs about inclusion

In exploring these three themes this chapter addresses the second research question:

RQ 2) What are these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion?

This chapter draws on the responses of 20 teachers, 10 from Millennium School and 10 from Centenary School (see tables 7.1 and 7.2). All the teachers in my study hold beliefs about special needs and inclusion. However in what follows, I have selected out exemplars from my data set that best illustrate the theme being

explored or that illustrate best the sorts of tensions and complexities that surround teachers beliefs in this area of their pedagogy.

**Table 7.1 Millennium School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Hameeda (f)	English and science	10 years	Classes 3 - 8
2) Marium (f)	English and social studies	21 years	Classes 3 - 5
3) Umbreen (f)	English, maths and science	9 years	Classes 1 and 2
4) Shaista (f)	English, maths and science	4 years	Class 2
5) Sameen (f)	Urdu and Islamiat	10 years	Classes 3 and 4
6) Adeela (f)	English and science	10 years	Class 3 and 4
7) Talat (f)	Urdu, Islamiat and Holy Quran recitation	22 years	Class 2 and 3
8) Sumera (f)	Computing	3 years	Pre-nursery to Class 1
9) Saima (f)	English, science and social studies	10 years	Class 3 and 4
10) Asma (f)	Maths, social studies and general knowledge	1 month	Class 3

**Table 7.2 Centenary School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Nausheen (f)	Urdu	18 years	Classes 1 and 2
2) Farzeen (f)	English, science maths and social studies	24 years	Class 3
3) Shireen (f)	Sports	10 years	Class 1 to 7
4) Asifa (f)	English, science, maths and social studies	1 year	Class 1
5) Faiza (f)	English, science, maths, social studies and journal writing	3 years	Class 2
6) Amal (f)	English, science, maths and social studies	1 ½ years	KG 2 and Class 1
7) Alina (f)	Computing	11 years	KG 1 to Class 6
8) Audrey (f)	Librarian	7 years	Nursery to Class 2
9) Annie (f)	Urdu	12 years	Class 3 and 4
10) Ghazanfar (m)	Music	7 years	Nursery to Class 4

## **7.2. Teachers' sets of beliefs about inclusion involving CWSN**

A great deal of work has explored the role played by teachers' beliefs and attitudes in relation to issues of inclusion. These beliefs have often been seen as pivotal in ensuring the success or as contributing to the ineffectiveness of inclusive practices (Villa et al., 1996; Avramidis, 2000; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). In this section, I explore some of the general views about inclusion as well as the concerns some teacher participants expressed about CSWN being in

mainstream education. My intention is to explore the underpinning factors on which their beliefs are constructed and why they hold certain beliefs.

Some teachers from Millennium and Centenary School viewed mainstream schooling as the best option for many CWSN and thought that their school was the right place for these children so that they could access all the opportunities these schools offer, such as a fuller curriculum. Hameeda stated:

If a child with special needs is not in a special school, if he was able to survive in the environment [Millennium School] that means he has the potential. So why can't we take some time to create that kind of an environment for him where he can relax? (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

Hameeda believed that CWSN can cope in the mainstream classroom if they are provided with adequate support. In her view mainstream school is the place for CWSN and they should be provided with adequate opportunities to grow. She had a strong opinion about the role of 'special' versus 'mainstream' schooling and was critical of the role of special schools. She had a conviction that a mainstream school and especially her school was the right kind of environment that CWSN should be in. By this she meant that the environment was richer in a mainstream school than in a special school.

In Talat's opinion:

I don't think special school is the right place for them... CWSN are being dealt with in a better way here [Millennium School]. Till the last we try our best. We give it at least 2 years minimum... (Talat interview at MS\_051010)

Talat, like Hameeda, was also critical of the idea of special schooling for CWSN, but her belief was based on the proposition that CWSN should be given a fair chance to thrive in the mainstream setting and that a longer commitment was needed in order for inclusion to succeed. Clearly, from her statement she took the view that including CWSN in mainstream classrooms would require dedication by staff over the long term.

Adeela, reflecting on CWSN present in her classroom, told me:



Mainstream is the best place for them [CWSN]... because I think I was able to cater for their needs. I know how to help them, facilitate them. Alhamdulillah [Grace of God] I have been able to apply the strategies that I have learnt... attention and time... now I know how to handle them... (Adeela interview at MS\_201010)

Adeela endorsed the view that CWSN can be catered for in the mainstream. In her experience she had been effective because, over time, she had acquired the skills needed to meet a wide range of learning needs. Unlike Hameeda and Talat, she was not critical of special schools. Her conviction grew from the satisfaction of being able to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills to cater for special needs. In her view, often allocating more time and individual attention was sufficient for CWSN to access learning in her mainstream classroom.

Their colleague Umbreen had chosen an Inclusive Education module out of the four electives offered during her MEd programme, because she felt, *'this is the need in our school, since we were expanding and we would take in more [CWSN]... also of its usefulness'* (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010). Her belief that mainstream schooling was the best choice for CWSN led her to choose the inclusive education module, her choice being duly supported by her school leadership.

Many of the respondents at Centenary School were positive about placing CWSN in mainstream schools. While many teachers were enthusiastic about CWSN being taught in mainstream schools, they did not always explain their reasons for this. One teacher had very clear reasons for her belief in inclusion. Shireen highlighted the 'normalness' of mainstream:

I feel placing them in our school is right. Special children should not be in a special environment; rather they should be in a normal environment. (Shireen interview at CS\_210910)

While it is worth noting that Shireen talks of 'them' being in 'our' school which signals a degree of 'othering', nevertheless she believed that special schools breed segregation. Her point was that CWSN should be included in mainstream schools as this experience becomes a stepping stone towards wider inclusion in mainstream society. She believed strongly that CWSN should not be hidden away from the world or treated any differently from other children. To some extent, it

might be argued that Shireen saw inclusion as a central belief in terms of all children's rights to a good education.

When asked about the choice of educational institution for CWSN, Mahreen expressed a more 'mixed' set of beliefs:

They should study in the mainstream but should continue with their therapies... so they can function better... Children with and without special needs should not be separated because if they are, then it will be very difficult to bring them together later, say in their professional lives... I think its perfect mixing them together. (Mahreen interview at CS\_150910)

Mahreen supported mainstream schooling as the best option for CWSN, on the basis of her belief that all children should learn together, but she pointed out that often additional help is required for some children in the form of support services. The therapies she referred to that are needed by some children are physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy, which can play an important role in providing assistance to CWSN. Unfortunately these were not provided in her school. Before becoming a teacher, Mahreen had been a school student at Centenary and took her A levels there. Later on in the interview she talked about her personal experience which had strongly impacted on her personal and professional beliefs:

I don't think I would have been very acceptable of inclusion if my friend with hearing impairment had not studied with us. I saw him perform... I don't think we let his disability come in the way of our interaction and friendship... the school brought us together and the teachers had a big role to play... (Mahreen interview at CS\_150910)

Alina also believed that inclusive schools promote understanding and friendship between different children:

One thing I have learned that other children are more sympathetic towards CWSN. For example, my son when he sees a CWSN he doesn't react in a negative way or thinks he shouldn't be played with. Same situation is in my class also, once the children are made to understand and are comforted, they become friends and work and play together. (Alina interview at CS 210910)

Asifa affirmed her colleague's view, *'I think it is a good thing..... the other children [without disabilities] see CWSN, it builds familiarity and acceptance....'*

(Asifa interview at CS\_200910). Alina and Asifa taught children in the early primary years and both thought that including CWSN as soon as possible was important as this supports acceptance and relation building between all members of the class. Although none of these teachers overtly claimed that their beliefs stemmed from the need to build an inclusive society, it is evident that this perspective did shape their views and their actions.

These four teachers from Centenary believed that mainstream schooling and their own schools facilitate a congenial learning atmosphere, where all children (with and without special needs) are able to interact in a manner that promotes awareness about various special needs and at the same time leads to a more inclusive school ethos. They believed that the inclusion of CWSN was beneficial for all pupils, both with and without special needs, as it helps to promote knowledge and understanding as well as respect for people. These teachers saw inclusion as a good way forward to support those with special needs being included in mainstream society.

So far I have explored the beliefs of teachers in both schools who claimed that inclusion should be the norm. Their reasons were to do with care for those children with special needs, an awareness of the added value of mainstream schooling, the need for more awareness and respect for diversity and difference as well as the fundamental rights of all children. However, some of the teachers I spoke with expressed some reservations and concerns. In what follows, concerns raised to do with teacher training, performance expectations, allocation of extra time and attention, extra support and severity of the disability are discussed.

For example, despite Marium claiming that a mainstream school was the most appropriate place for CWSN, she voiced her concerns about the lack of specialised training and her view that this ‘lack’ could impede inclusion:

Often new teachers do not even know what the word or the terms like dyslexia are... I feel the teacher should be aware of these problems for which training is very necessary and needed (Marium interview at MS\_131010)

Having had 20 years of teaching experience, Marium empathised with the new teachers who were often unaware of various forms of special need and lacked the

skills to take up inclusion. In her view, although the professional development sessions were quite useful in her school, more specialised training was needed. Citing her own example, she felt privileged that she had had specialised training (from a specialised training institution), to deal with special needs. This training had helped her in dealing with special needs in her classroom and as a result, she could understand why teachers who had not been prepared in this area could struggle to meet the demands of CWSN. She supported a call for specialised training for all teachers in order to help them work effectively with diversity in their mainstream classrooms. Marium's colleague, Saima, agreed about the need for training, *'the teachers should be trained, should know how to go about... taking these children along with the class'* (Saima interview at MS\_07/10/10). Saima too believed that a mainstream teacher needs adequate training to deal with special needs as and when they may arise in the mainstream classroom. Specialised training, in her opinion was the key to promoting and developing effective inclusion.

Amal from Centenary reported:

We do teach through guide books and internet... if we have problems with teaching CWSN then the principal helps... no I haven't had specialised training to deal with a child with autism in my class... he has been unable to learn anything. (Amal interview at CS\_09/09/10)

Amal, who taught class two, suggested that although the school leadership was supportive in including CWSN, often the training needed to equip teachers with the necessary skills to handle diversity was missing. This lack was most evident when children with complex needs (such as being on the autism spectrum) were granted admission to the school and the teachers were not equipped with the necessary skills or strategies to support them. In her opinion, in the absence of the adequate knowledge and training she was unable to address one child's special needs.

Faiza reflects on an earlier time at Centenary:

I had two CWSN and I didn't know what to do with them... as I had no special training on what to do... I was worried... I had not done any course before... (Faiza interview at CS\_070910)

Fazia too felt she was not equipped to handle the diverse learning needs of her students and told me she was 'completely clueless' on how to move forward. Some professional training, course or skills to support the CWSN in her class would have been helpful. It is evident that her needs had not been taken into account by senior staff when CWSN were placed in her classroom.

Likewise, lack of adequate teacher training was an issue that Shaista believed had hampered her ability to cater for a CWSN in her class:

It was very challenging for me to work with that child and I feel I am not experienced enough... I'm not qualified to deal with these children [CWSN]. I don't know about the other teachers. (Shaista interview at MS \_191010)

She explained that the child stayed in her class as the mother was concerned that her child would fall behind in a special school, whereas a mainstream school would enable him to find a place in the real world. Although Shaista accepted this child in her classroom on the mother's and the school leadership's insistence, she talked of how she was challenged by this child's presence in her classroom. Like Faiza and Amal, the difficulties she faced stemmed from her belief that she had not received any professional training on meeting special needs in her mainstream classroom.

In terms of these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion, this second set of teachers all stated that they supported inclusion in theory and could see why it could be a positive force for good for all children. However, in practice, where they felt that their skills or professional training had not helped them to respond appropriately in being able to meet the needs of CWSN, their beliefs in the value of inclusion became mediated by this difficulty in their pedagogical skill-set.

Although Millennium and Centenary both provided some in-house as well as external training opportunities for their teachers, there was an expressed need made by some teachers for more specialised training before CWSN were placed in their mainstream classrooms. Teachers not having the necessary skills have been cited as a reason for their resistance to the implementation of inclusion (Hodgkins, 2005). Forlin's study (2001) also reported teachers' negative

perceptions towards inclusion when they had no experience of this in their teaching or had not had any inclusive training.

There was another tension that played into the beliefs that some teachers held about the value of inclusion of CWSN. Some of the respondents were concerned that CWSN were failing to perform at an academic level consistent with that expected for their particular grade. In Pakistan, as elsewhere, there had been an increased concern with outputs and outcomes of learning – with performance and attainment. Some of the teachers were concerned that overall performance outcomes would be somehow depressed or reduced if CWSN were in the mainstream classroom.

Nausheen from Centenary argued that:

Inclusion should be based on the performance of the child, for if there is a visible change towards better performance and achievement then CWSN should continue in mainstream, but if a change is not visible, then it is unfair for those normal children as the teacher is making so much effort for that child without any result. (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

Here it is possible to see a dichotomy between the ‘normal child and the child who is not ‘normal’ – a point that I discuss later on in this chapter. However, Nausheen believes that a mainstream teacher is tasked with providing for all the students in her class. She seemed to be suggesting that, in her view, the presence of (some) CWSN in her classroom could result in a compromised learning pace. She believed CWSN should be able to meet the standard performance criteria of their peers, if they are to continue in mainstream education. In terms of teachers’ beliefs, from what Nausheen says, does this mean that she believes that there are some CWSN who are more/less able to cope and thus some who are more/less able to be included? Does this signal a less than whole-hearted acceptance of inclusion as an educational belief and value? Or is this a pragmatic response where beliefs are mediated and moulded by the reality of classroom life?

For some teachers, like Annie, academic achievement was considered one of the most important criteria for inclusion to be effective.

I think for their academics they should go to a special school or sometime spent in a special school and sometime spent in a mainstream school to help socialise... they will learn better... perform better... (Annie interview at CS\_170910)

Here Annie's proposal of partial inclusion where CWSN could go to a special school for academic purposes and use the mainstream school primarily for developing their socialisation skills also reflects a split set of values and beliefs about inclusion. She believes in inclusion but only so far. Clearly, Annie and Nausheen prioritised academic achievement above every other consideration.

Pearman et al.'s (1997) study identified teachers' concerns about the pressure to provide academic instruction for diverse needs sometimes leading to a call for specialised provision within the school or for the complete withdrawal of CWSN. In the case of some of the teachers in my sample, this pressure was evident; a pressure that worked against inclusion in a full sense and that argued for partial or 'social' forms of inclusion that did not restrict performance levels. One point that has to be raised here is that even in classrooms where there are no children who have been identified as CWSN, there will always and inevitably be a spread of different capacities and aptitudes. If the pressure to achieve means that some children get excluded from participation in learning, then this practice raises ethical questions about the rights of all children to receive a good education.

Adding to the challenge of dealing with varied performance levels, balancing the time and attention needed to support CWSN with what was needed to support other pupils was another issue raised by some teachers.

Saima said:

There are time restraints... due to having the pressure of completing the syllabus and also the pressure that if I give time to this child [CWSN] at this particular moment the other 29 will get ignored... at times it is difficult to cater to everyone's needs and I am a single teacher in the class so it is a problem... but I still want to help the child. (Saima interview at MS\_07/10/10)

Saima was concerned with the continuous trade offs which she had to make on a day to day basis to ensure that she supported the CWSN, but did not neglect the

rest of the class and the pressure of having to complete the syllabus on time added to this complex set of demands.

These sorts of pressures meant that Farzeen from Centenary School thought that in some cases including CWSN was not the best option:

For giving one child extra attention meant neglecting the class as I have 20 students. Continuously I keep an eye on the child, but the other children are neglected. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

Having a CWSN in her class who had severe behaviour and attention issues meant that Farzeen did not see inclusion as a suitable option for this particular child. Her decision was based on the dilemma she faced where often extra time and attention had to be given to this child, thus limiting the time that she was able to allocate to the rest of the students in her classroom. Teachers in mainstream classes invariably have to make decisions about the amount of time they spend with individual students (Ferguson, 2008). However, it would appear that Farzeen faced extra pressure in this regard owing to the inclusion of this particular CWSN in her class.

These dilemmas faced by Saima and Farzeen in their mainstream classrooms were also reported by Singal (2008), in that teachers in her study faced similar challenges trying to provide full inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Singal's research also found that some teachers believed that including CWSN in regular lessons slowed the pace of their instruction, thus holding back other pupils (as with Annie and Nausheen above).

Other staff raised the issue of what they saw as severity of need in relation to CWSN being placed with them. For instance, even though Saima at Millennium did support inclusion of CWSN in mainstream, in principle at least, she commented that:

If they [CWSN] are struggling in mainstream... only if there is a dire need which cannot be catered for in the mainstream then maybe they [CWSN] should be in a special school. (Saima interview at MS\_07/10/10)



Clearly, she did not believe in inclusion for all CWSN and Sumera, who taught computer studies at Millennium, expressed similar sentiments signalled below in the use of the pronoun ‘they’ and in what she said:

I think they should go to a different set up... I think that when a child is special to that extent than he should be separate and not here. (Sumera interview at MS\_15/10/10)

According to Saima and Sumera’s beliefs, a special school would be more suitable for some CWSN as needs that their schools could not cater for would be more appropriately addressed. Sumera cited an example of a CWSN in her classroom, who because of unsatisfactory academic and social progress had to leave their school to join a special school.

Similarly, some respondents at Centenary shared the same concerns about inclusion being ineffective in some cases owing to what they saw as the severity of the special need. For instance, Farzeen felt that:

I feel maybe if it’s a severe case then they need some other space. Like in their own environment, where other children are there and the teacher should be qualified enough and should be trained properly. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

Farzeen’s concerns were based on her experience or it can be said inexperience in teaching children with special needs like autism in her mainstream classroom. She was opposed to the idea of including CWSN when, according to her, the severity of the need posed a concern. She expressed her belief that often teachers in special schools are more adequately trained in particular special needs.

Audrey believed that in some cases a special school setting would be more beneficial for some CWSN as compared to a mainstream classroom:

I think a special school would be better, as more specialist teachers would know how to handle the special needs... these children need more time, ample time... just not those 45 minutes in which we are teaching other children as well... don’t you think that they are left behind? (Audrey interview at CS\_230910)

The time allocation in mainstream classrooms, in her opinion, was not enough to cater for some CWSN. Audrey believed that mainstream is not always a suitable

option as it can result in some CWSN being left behind and therefore not being included.

Amal cited an example of a child with autism whose needs she believed she had been unable to address adequately in her classroom environment. This child, often with one to one support, was unable to progress academically and also could not cope with the communication and socialisation aspects of the regular classroom. Amal believed that in such cases it was not appropriate to opt for an inclusive arrangement. Inclusion carried out without proper organisational change and lack of adequate provisions can result in an unfulfilling experience for all those concerned with a particular need, not least the child (Reiser, 2012). Thus, in terms of teachers' beliefs, while there does seem to be a groundswell of support for the principles of inclusion, in many cases, caveats are raised in relation to some of the practical and contextual barriers which, if not addressed, might reinforce exclusion rather than promoting inclusion. From what these teachers say, their beliefs in principle are tempered by an awareness of context--dependent matters.

Extra support in the classroom was identified as a necessary condition for inclusion to be successful. Saima from Millennium explained her concerns:

When it comes to inclusion, I feel one teacher with 30 children is helpless... even if she wants to do it... the number of children is a barrier... when we are shown these videos of western/other classrooms during our professional development sessions, we see that the number of children in those classrooms are usually between 10-15 students with each teacher... We usually have a bigger group so it is a big challenge... (Saima interview at MS\_071010)

Saima considered the large student-teacher ratio, without extra support in the form of extra human resources in her classroom, to be a barrier to including CWSN. In her view, the high numbers of children placed an extra burden on the teacher which made inclusion difficult in such a situation, although the desire for the teacher to do so and their belief in inclusion as a core value was still there. Asma said, '*CWSN should be mainstreamed but if you are giving even one CWSN to a class, then you should provide an extra teacher*' (Asma interview at MS\_25/10/10). That is, inclusion to Asma was only viable with the provision of extra support in the classroom.

Provision of extra support was also highlighted by two teachers at Centenary, Ghazanfar for example said, *'teachers need extra support to handle CWSN'* (Ghazanfar interview at CS\_270910). As a music teacher, he realised that he could not take the whole class unaided so often he sought assistance from the class's teacher. His colleague Faiza believed, *'I should have a helper in the classroom... my class strength is high and CWSN need attention'* (Faiza interview at CS\_070910). In her view, mainstream was a better option for CWSN, but only with additional staffing being available in the classroom.

Overall the teachers I interviewed were divided about the conditions that they believed were necessary for effective inclusion. Their responses appear to fall into two main camps: first, there are those teachers who unconditionally support inclusion, regardless of the kinds of special needs in their classroom. They hold the belief that inclusion is a right of every child and are realistic about the challenges faced, but appear to have a conviction that these can be resolved. A second group of teachers supported inclusion, but raised context-dependent matters that could determine its effectiveness or ineffectiveness, including: adequate teacher training, performance demands, allocation of extra time and attention, extra support and the severity of the disability. These sorts of dilemmas and 'brakes' to full inclusion have been reflected in research studies conducted by, for example, Horne & Ricardo (1988), Barton, (1992) and Singal (2008). These researchers contend that teacher opposition to inclusion can be attributed to its being implemented in an unplanned manner without modifications to a school's organisational structure, to inadequate consideration being given to the instructional skills of the teacher and there being no guarantee of support and resources. Thus, any expectation that as long as teachers have the right set of strong beliefs then inclusion can be enacted, seems to be somewhat naïve.

### **7.3. Teachers' views about how having CWSN in their classrooms has influenced their practice**

The semi-structured interviews provided the teachers at Millennium and Centenary with an opportunity to express their views on many aspects of their professional lives, their understanding of special needs and how they saw its impact on their teaching practices. As will become apparent, some of these

teachers warmed towards inclusion over time, whilst others' opinions hardened against unconditional inclusion after struggling to provide positive learning experiences for some CWSN in their classrooms.

Teachers from both schools claimed that their understanding and ability to provide for CWSN had gone through developmental stages.

Understanding the children's individual needs has come now, though I think I was quite a caring teacher before as well, but now with this course my beliefs and perceptions are clearer and stronger on special needs and inclusion. (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

Umbreen was given the opportunity by the school leadership to study for a master's degree in education. During her degree she undertook an elective module on inclusive education, (mentioned earlier in the chapter), and reported that this experience had a positive impact on her attitude towards teaching all children and catering for their diverse learning needs. Over time, she gained new insights that enabled her to understand better the needs of all her students and to review her teaching pedagogies. The point here is that when teachers met the challenges of inclusion, over time, and perhaps with support, their beliefs changed as they gained experience through which to extend their inclusive strategies.

Hameeda from Millennium School reflected on her earlier days, *'I found it very challenging in the beginning and had no idea how to deal with CWSN'* (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010). She recalled an example of a CWSN in her class who had multiple degenerative health problems and was also deaf. She told me how she worked through this challenge by involving the parents to help her understand the needs of her student and through using encouragement as a strategy for the child to take an interest in and perform learning tasks.

Hameeda and Umbreen's colleague Sameen, who taught Urdu, recollects:

Believe me I was very satisfied with myself when a CWSN gave such good results during the second term. The coordinators knew and I was satisfied in the eyes of God that the child benefitted and he is doing quite well... (Sameen interview at MS\_111010).

Sameen's example indicates how her belief was instrumental in creating a positive impact through her teaching and learning for this particular child. This child's

good performance gave her a sense of satisfaction and elation that her efforts have worked well. As an aside, it may well be that for some teachers their faith led them to value each child in their classroom and thus, extend their belief in the principle of inclusion.

For some, it was aspects of their biography that propelled their beliefs and commitments towards inclusion. Nausheen reflected on how her teaching commitment had evolved through the years at Centenary:

I have always felt an inner urge towards special needs, more so because my youngest daughter has a special need. I have discovered the capabilities within myself... teaching has brought me so much confidence... I was groomed and polished in this environment... (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

In her view, the various professional development courses and learning opportunities during her career at Centenary had enabled her to discover her teaching potential and ability to handle CWSN. It should be noted here that Nausheen had a personal experience of CWSN but had a rather different viewpoint about inclusion (mentioned earlier in the chapter).

Faiza from Centenary talked about her initial experiences with CWSN:

I had two CWSN, they needed special attention and I didn't know what I was supposed to do with them. I had not done any course before. So I was worried, how I am supposed to handle them... So I used some strategies... individual attention...

Later in the interview she said:

At times it is a very difficult choice for me whether I should stay with those children or the ones who have special needs... well you can say it was not a complete accomplishment... I did my level best. (Faiza interview at CS\_07/09/2010)

Initially, Faiza had no idea about special needs and how to deal with them. She told me that she complained to her head teacher that she was unable to help a particular child progress in her class. The head teacher then shared the CWSN files with her and once she understood the special needs of her students she tried to address them by using individual attention as a strategy. Here it may be Faiza's belief in trying to do the best possible for all children, itself a form of social

justice and inclusion, that prompted her to explore the possibility of alternative pedagogical approaches to ensure that one particular child was enabled to learn.

Alina reflected that in the beginning when she joined Centenary she was wary of CWSN as she did not know how to deal with learning differences, which as she shared during our talk, led her to get agitated at their disinterest in understanding her instructions or teaching. She thought every child was ‘normal’ and the ones who were not behaving well must have behavioural problems. She recalled how she was unable to comprehend that a child who was unable to sit still must have had tremendous energy or if they were unable to listen they might have some other problem. It was only after some time during which she gained experience that she realised that it was not the child’s fault and that there are all kinds of children. After a few years she had started to enjoy her mixed ability class:

I have a child he is not very good with computers as his hand control is not very good when he is drawing on the computer. Yesterday he was drawing and according to him he was designing a world map showing me this is Australia, India, and Pakistan etc. In the beginning, seeing a child perform like this, I would have ignored him and would not have even saved his work but now I will take an interest, ask them about their work and I really enjoy the feedback I get from them. They express themselves freely and I simply enjoy all this. (Alina interview at CS 210910)

These examples indicate how Alina and Faiza’s experiences with CWSN had taught them, over time, to accept and find ways to assist learning differences in their mainstream classroom. This assistance often developed into offering differentiated teaching to assist in improving the academic and social performance of CWSN.

The initial challenges, the sense of achievement and also the dilemmas that some of these teachers experienced in teaching CWSN have been identified as the crux of effective inclusive teaching by Villa et al. (1996). Their study suggests that the level of commitment towards inclusion often increases as the teacher gains more experience and expertise in teaching CWSN. As reported by Hameeda, Nausheen, Umbreen, Alina and Sameen, their experience with these children helped them to make better provision in their classrooms, thus replicating with the findings of Villa et al. (1996).

On the other hand some of my respondents, having had CWSN in their classrooms and having tried strategies of inclusion, expressed different beliefs. Sumera believed:

When a child is special to that extent... then they should be separate and not here ... at that time of admission why does the school admit them? That creates a problem in the class. (Sumera interview at MS\_15/10/10)

Sumera felt that her school should abstain from admitting CWSN, if inclusion were to be undertaken in an ad hoc manner, where adequate provisions were missing. She cited a particular case of a CWSN in her class who, at the end of one year, ended up going to a special school. It was probably the lack of resources, support and lack of professional training in supporting diversity that led Sumera to feel so strongly about segregation in this case.

Annie said that she had tried and tested some of the strategies that were suggested in her school on her own, and had tried to involve the child's parents but all her efforts throughout the year did not produce any beneficial results.

We do try that that [CWSN] do some work like write a few lines... parental involvement... meetings with them to guide them... I used to keep children after school and make them work, but then I was advised not to... children are tired and hungry... whole year they did not gain much... better off in a special school... (Annie interview at CS\_17/09/10)

She believed it was pointless to go on when inclusion was not producing any results and no change in either academic or social learning was visible.

Faiza told me:

It is a big task... a CWSN in my class last year, he gave me a very tough time... behaviour, understanding, hyperactive... all kinds of issues... I complained to the principal that I cannot do it... (Faiza interview at CS\_07/09/2010)

Faiza said during her interview with me that she felt psychologically and physically drained by trying to offer support to this particular child. This child posed issues for her, which she felt unable to cope with. Although inclusive education may be perceived as an exciting challenge (Engelbrecht et al. 2001), producing many benefits, some teachers find it stressful as well as physiologically

and psychologically draining (Williams & Gersch, 2004) as with Sumera, Annie and Faiza.

In this section, I have explored how teaching CWSN can influence teachers' classroom practices. For some of my respondents, their experiences gained over the years in teaching CWSN had promoted a positive turn in their approach towards inclusion. They felt more comfortable and well equipped now to handle diversity. However, based on some rather negative classroom experiences other teachers had become convinced that inclusion does not work for all CWSN. Their perspectives could also have been influenced by other contextual-dependent matters raised earlier in this chapter, such as inadequate teacher training, poor guidance on CWSN performance criteria and lack of classroom support. One issue relates to the so-called degree of severity of special needs and, in some cases, if the challenge seemed too complex, teachers seemed more likely to advocate special schooling while still holding onto beliefs about inclusion, albeit on a continuum of need. CWSN who had moderate learning needs were seen as easier to include in the mainstream; those with more challenging needs were more likely to be seen to be almost beyond mainstream inclusion.

#### **7.4. Terminology used and the extent to which this does or does not reflect teachers' beliefs about inclusion**

In this section, I return to some of the language/terminology that teachers used to describe special needs. Avramidis & Norwich (2002) contend that there are different understandings of disability and special needs, such that terminologies vary from context to context. In the context of Pakistan, terms that would be considered derogatory in contemporary Western circumstances are still used to describe CWSN by some of the respondents at Centenary School. In what follows, words spoken by these teachers such as 'normal/abnormal', 'fix/polish' and 'perfect' that are consistent with a deficit model of disability are presented and analysed. The question that links this work on terminology to the core theme of this chapter relates to the extent (or not) that the use of certain terms could be said to reveal something of the beliefs about inclusion held by the speaker.

For instance, Shireen, the sports teacher at Centenary School, stated:



Abnormal means who does not give any response. They do not understand anything. So such children create a problem when placed with normal children... but only to a small extent, not a lot. (Shireen interview at CS\_210910)

Shireen's statement using the term 'abnormal' reinforces the idea of difference, a notion of otherness that CWSN are 'less' not different people and thus should be treated differently. It would appear that as a relatively new member of staff and without having been given adequate training she had yet to be exposed to the language relating to inclusion. Nausheen also used similar terms:

My experience is CWSN are in the class with normal children but they cannot be normalised to that extent. How much they can be normalised depends on the efforts of the teacher also. (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

She is an older member of the staff with over 15 years experience and her use of the term 'normal' suggests that her beliefs about special needs and inclusion may still be related to seeing CWSN as not 'normal'. This in spite of her expressed support for inclusion as mentioned earlier in the chapter. In fact, on more than one occasion she used this turn of phrase, as the following examples show:

If the child is studying with normal children and he is not making any effort, take the example of Azam, he starts getting irritated with the demands of doing his work. Children also point out to the teacher that he never does any work, not for any teacher. He does get disturbed. (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

She also said:

Perhaps if you keep them in a normal environment then they start making an effort looking at the other children, that is, if he can do it, I can also. So, if all the children are the same, not making any effort, then that child will not try and make that effort. This is my point of view, that when they see others performing and getting stars for example, then they also might try and be stimulated to achieve. (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

In general, Nausheen seemed to take the view that those who were included would benefit from learning how 'normal' pupils behave. Inclusion here seems to be about making the CWSN conform to the behaviour of others in the class.

Asifa gave an example from her classroom of a child with a physical disability, who she did not have issues with in terms of including as long as he was

performing well intellectually. However, this was not the case, for as she reported:

I think it's a bad thing for the child because he is doing nothing. He is being useless... then he should be sent to a junior class, where he can polish himself, fix himself properly and then go into a new class. (Asifa interview at CS\_200910)

Her expression to 'fix' and 'polish' things, implies that there is a right way of doing things that all children should aspire to, thereby failing to embrace any aspects of difference. For Asifa, like Nausheen, academic performance according to the achievement targets of the class was crucial for acceptance at the grade level.

The term 'perfect' was used by Farzeen to explain her perception that all her students could be at nearly the same achievement level. She wished that her students would be all academically equal, but she realised that this was not possible as the children did have different needs and performed accordingly. However, she had come to accept that her original aims were unrealistic.

If a child is perfect I don't think it is so difficult. What I feel is I really want to make a difference. I want every child to be perfect, but it's not possible. Like 2-3 [CWSN] are there I want all the children to be at the same level. This is what I really want to do but I know I can't. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

Like her colleague Asifa, Farzeen had unrealistic perceptions where she wanted to create 'perfection', but it would appear that she was beginning to accept that learning differences were inevitable and perfection illusory, even among children who were not categorised as CWSN.

Hehir & Katzman (2012: 09) have argued that such terms as those used by Shireen, Nausheen and Asifa are often based on an 'ableism' assumption, which is based on the requirement of all individuals to fit in society. They suggest that this assumption emanates from a series of beliefs which project a view of a standard body and self, viewed by society as essential and fully human, where disability is then viewed as a disturbance to this projection. Teachers holding such views fail to understand that progress and achievement levels can be different for many children (including those categorised as CWSN) and that these children

might benefit from actions that enable them to access learning equally (Hehir & Katzman (2012).

Terms consistent with this ‘ableist’ perspective, used by some of the teachers at Centenary School to describe CWSN, could perhaps be attributed to the school leadership failing to counter their usage in a timely and effective manner. In addition, the lack of opportunities for professional development, especially in the case of Shireen and Asifa, who were relatively new to the school and had not dealt with CWSN before they joined Centenary School, might explain their position (and use of terminology) on disability. The more rigorous and up-to-date in-house professional development programmes at Millennium School would appear to have been instrumental in creating and supporting the use and awareness of more appropriate and up-to-date terminology and practices regarding the inclusion of CWSN.

However, some of my respondents were more sensitised to the issue of what is/is not appropriate language to use in the area of inclusion. Mariam and Hameeda were concerned that language that categorised children did not match their beliefs about inclusive practices. Mariam asserted, *‘I don’t think that children come under any category of good or bad. They are all children!’* (Mariam interview at MS\_131010). In Mariam’s opinion, it was unfair to categorise children in any way because they are first of all children, which is the basic point of consideration (and of inclusion) in teaching them.

Hameeda held strong beliefs about labelling children:

I feel that we should not make up our mind about any child or label him or her or have assumptions beforehand. Why? There could be several reasons for their performance or attitude, maybe the child was disturbed this year or maybe she was different previously and she is going to work better in this class. (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

Both Hameeda and Mariam were joined by their colleagues Saima and Adeela in pointing out that often negative labelling was a cause of low self-esteem, lessened confidence and prompted more disruptive behaviour (Thomson, 2012).

Alina recalled how at her former school the perception about students was, *‘whoever cannot retain will be labelled as a ‘duffer’ [a derogatory term meaning*

*an unintelligent person]* (Alina interview at CS\_ 140910). She explained that coming to Centenary challenged this categorisation as the school has clear policies against the labelling of students. Alina's previous experiences helped her analyse and reflect critically upon her beliefs about CWSN, becoming instrumental in guiding her to a new way of thinking (and speaking) about them.

However, this brief consideration of the language and terminology being used by some of the teachers that I interviewed, does raise questions about the level of understanding about special needs and inclusion at Centenary School. Some of the terms used by some teachers would be considered anachronistic in many of today's settings. None of the Millennium teachers used words associated with the 'ableism' model of disability. However, many of my respondents from both schools were against the use of any negative labelling of their students. As my participants explained, in both schools, the term CWSN was mainly used for planning and instruction purposes. Often the teachers I interviewed faced what Norwich (2009: 466) has described as 'dilemmas of difference', where some form of categorisation was needed to attract the provision of adequate services to cater for diversity in learning. The teacher respondents in my study, by refraining from labelling the children in a negative way, were attempting to create school cultures where the children were not known by their disability or ability, but were recognised simply as being children, as Salisbury & McGregor, (2005) assert should be the case.

## **7.5. Summary and discussion**

In this chapter, I have explored the beliefs and values that were evidenced in my interviews with the teachers at Centenary and Millennium School about inclusion and the education of CWSN. In this last section I want to reflect briefly on some of the findings and the implication of these findings for in-school practices.

First, in setting out to explore the beliefs and values that these teachers reported holding about issues relating to the inclusion of CWSN in general as well as in their classroom practices, some conceptual questions need to be revisited. Beliefs and values have some features in common, but they are also distinctive. Beliefs generally refer to a feeling that something is the case or is true. So the teacher

may believe that all children are entitled to a good education. However, beliefs may sometimes be irrational and hard to shift. For example, some teachers may strongly believe that CWSN are better served in separate specialist schools. Values are also intimately related to beliefs but they are perceptions about what is worthwhile or about the best way to behave. For example, a teacher may value all children and thus argue that each child needs to be treated fairly in a manner that respects differences. In some cases, values and beliefs may come into conflict – for instance, a teacher may hold a value about the need for separate provision for CWSN as being socially just although their value is built on a belief that these children are not ‘normal’ and thus, they need different treatment.

From what the teachers say in their interviews, by and large they speak of an approach that values inclusion. The majority of the teachers that I interviewed said that they were in favour of the inclusion of CWSN in their schools and classrooms. They recognised that the school’s leadership teams were committed to an inclusive approach. In some cases, they reported that they had been well supported in moving towards a richer and deeper understanding of what could be achieved in mainstream schooling to assure that inclusion was being put into practice. However, all researchers have to ask themselves questions about why respondents say what they say and it could be that these teachers were aware of the schools’ policy commitment (even though it might have been more rhetorical in some ways) and they also reported what they thought I wanted to hear. Thus, they all reported valuing inclusion.

However, when they came to talk about their classroom practices, some of them seemed to be suggesting that they believed that inclusion was not always possible. They cited cases where they believed that in large classrooms, individual needs were harder to meet. They spoke of children whom they seemed to believe would not manage to navigate successfully. In these instances, there appeared to be a conflict between their espoused values and beliefs perhaps because of some of the context-dependent factors that they had to deal with. This dissonance was evidenced in the language that they sometimes deployed in relation to those CWSN in their classrooms. As detailed in this chapter, some teachers said that they believed in inclusion but talked of ‘normal’ children. In this way they

perhaps unwittingly signalled a belief that there are ‘normal/abnormal’ children as well as using the language of dis/ablism.

In terms of starting to think carefully about the language being used by teachers when they talk directly about CWSN (and this term itself is an excluding label) there are two main issues. First, if the language that is part of the way a group is socially regarded perpetuates a negative and oppressive view of children with learning needs, then it may be that society may not recognise the social justice rights of this constituency. In this way, a belief is maintained that some people are not able to access mainstream schooling. This group may not be recognised as fully entitled to social goods such as a decent education. The language being used by some teachers may be interwoven with sets of less positive beliefs about CWSN, which still persist despite the inclusion rhetoric being used in the school at large. There is also an ‘etymological’ argument that says that, in some contexts, words are used inappropriately and that the word itself does not signal any deeply held value or belief. It could be argued that in Pakistan, in the language of special needs/inclusion there is a lag between northern hemisphere discourses and those used in everyday practice. However, an alternative view would be that concepts like ‘normal/abnormal’ are always oppressive terms and need to be eradicated for they do indeed convey a sense of the lack of respect and undervaluing of another human person – in this case, children.

What then are the implications of these findings for in-school practices? While some of the teachers had undergone some extensive in-service professional development, particularly those at Millennium School, it would appear that a significant number had not received much such input at Centenary School. Whilst some teachers were more conversant with the philosophy and the sorts of values and beliefs that would be regarded as ‘good practice’ in the field, which they brought successfully into their classrooms, others seemed to be struggling to meet the complexities of working with CWSN in a busy inclusive setting and, in some cases, were perhaps almost ‘blaming’ these children for adding to the difficulties they were facing.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Teachers' beliefs about inclusion and their pedagogical outcomes**

#### **8.1. Introduction**

Teachers' beliefs about disability or special needs play an important role in influencing their attitudes as well as their teaching practices in their diverse classrooms (Jordan et al.1997:83). Bingimlas and Hanrahan (2010) have argued for the need to understand the importance as well as complexities of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practice. Thus, this chapter analyses the impact of teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion that influence some of the ways they attempt to address these in their mainstream classrooms. Three significant themes have emerged from my coding and analysis of the interview data with the participant teachers in relation to their reflections on their practice in the light of their beliefs about inclusion and pedagogy. These are:

- The ways in which teachers evaluate and address the learning requirements of CWSN
- Collaborative practices within the school in support of CWSN
- Teachers' views about the professional development opportunities that support this aspect of pedagogy

From my coding and data analysis of the transcripts, I argue that these themes are of relevance in addressing the third research question of my study:

RQ 3) How do teachers' beliefs about inclusion of CSWN impact upon their pedagogical practices?

This chapter draws on data collected from interviews with 29 of my respondents, 14 from Millennium and 15 from Centenary school (see tables 8.1 and 8.2) and also includes some of my field notes. In what follows I have selected extracts that best illustrate the three key themes I identified in the respondents' descriptions of how their views about inclusion led them to address special needs in their mainstream classrooms.

**Table 8.1 Millennium School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Hameeda (f)	English and science	10 years	Classes 3 - 8
2) Marium (f)	English and social studies	21 years	Classes 3 - 5
3) Umbreen (f)	English, maths and science	9 years	Classes 1 and 2
4) Shaista (f)	English, maths and science	4 years	Class 2
5) Sameen (f)	Urdu and islamiat	10 years	Classes 3 and 4
6) Adeela (f)	English and science	10 years	Class 3 and 4
7) Talat (f)	Urdu, islamiat and Holy Quran recitation	22 years	Class 2 and 3
8) Sumera (f)	Computing	3 years	Pre-nursery to Class 1
9) Saima (f)	English, science and social studies	10 years	Class 3 and 4
10) Asma (f)	Maths, social studies and general knowledge	1 month	Class 3
11) Ghazal (f)	Urdu and Holy Quran recitation	19 years	Class 3 and 4
12) Iffat (f)	English, Maths and Science	6 ½ years	Class 2
13) Afsheen (f)	English reading	16 years	Class 2



14) Irfana (f)	English and social studies	I year	Class 3 and 4
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**Table 8.2 Centenary School respondents referred to in this chapter**

Name (pseudonym)	Teaching subjects	Teaching experience	Teaching class/es
1) Nausheen (f)	Urdu	18 years	Classes 1 and 2
2) Farzeen (f)	English, science maths and social studies	24 years	Class 3
3) Shireen (f)	Sports	10 years	Class 1 to 7
4) Asifa (f)	English, science, maths and social studies	1 year	Class 1
5) Faiza (f)	English, science, maths, social studies and journal writing	3 years	Class 2
6) Amal (f)	English, science, maths and social studies	1 ½ years	KG 2 and Class 1
7) Alina (f)	Computing	11 years	KG 1 to Class 6
8) Audrey (f)	Librarian	7 years	Nursery to Class 2
9) Annie (f)	Urdu	12 years	Class 3 and 4

10) Ghazanfar (m)	Music	7 years	Nursery to Class 4
11) Asjad (m)	Creative movement	13 years	Class 3 and 4
12) Mahreen (f)	Art and language development	1 month	Class 2
13) Mercy (f)	Librarian	6 years	Class 3 to 6
14) Rakhshanda (f)	Arts and crafts	2 years	Pre-nursery to Class 2
15) Maheen (f)	Maths, science, English and environment	2 years	Class 2

**Figure 8.1. A description of the three themes and their subsections covered in the present chapter**

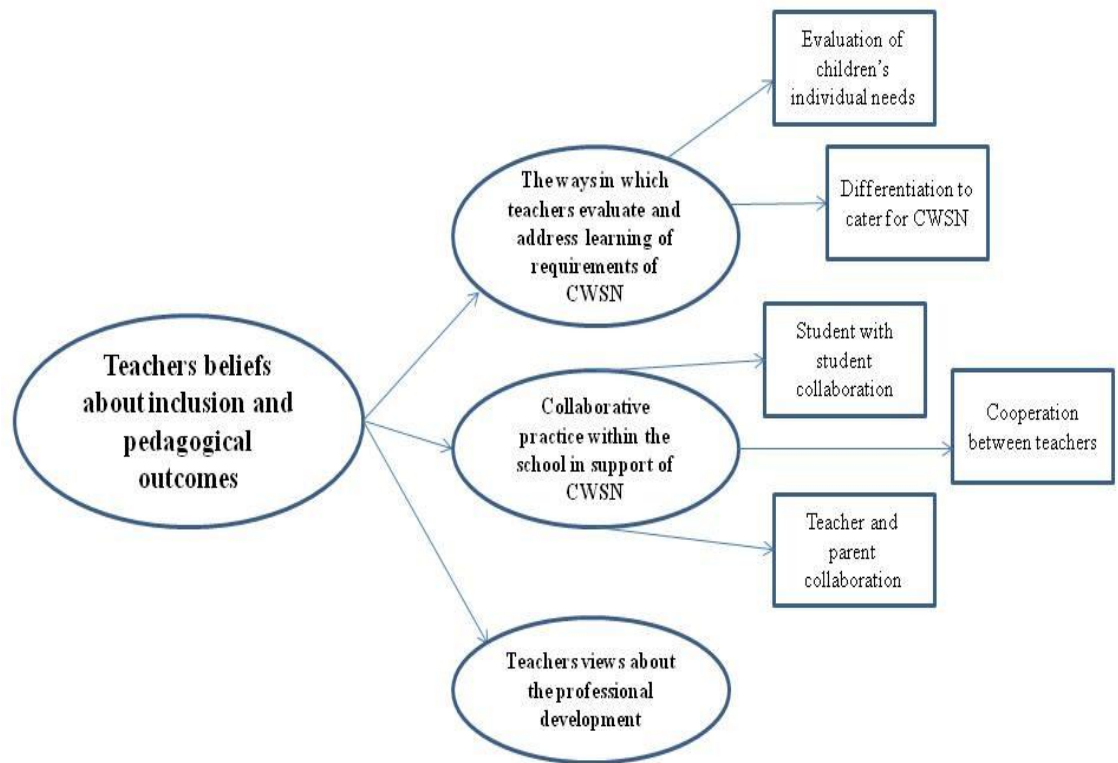


Figure 8.1 provides an overview of the three key themes that have emerged from the data analysis that explored the links between teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion and how these beliefs impacted on their classroom teaching. The first theme deals with the ways in which teachers evaluate children's learning with a focus on CWSN. This leads to a consideration of the various forms of differentiation that were being used by teachers to address special needs. The focus then shifts to the various ways in which the different stakeholders, students' parents and teachers collaborate to embrace inclusion and provides evidence of the ways in which some aspects of teachers' beliefs influence these collaborative efforts to support CWSN. The last theme explores teachers' beliefs about the training they have received and what they see as their needs regarding further professional development.

## **8.2. The ways in which teachers evaluate and address learning requirements of CWSN**

The teachers from both schools identified a range of techniques that they deploy in their classrooms to address the different learning needs of their students, based on their beliefs and values about what they thought was good practice in this area as well as on what they thought was achievable in their situation. These included: evaluating children's individual needs and based on this evaluation, putting into practice a range of different forms of differentiation to cater for CWSN. In what follows, I will take each approach in turn to explore the interplay between beliefs about inclusion and outcomes in practice as reported by my participants. This will involve at times referring back to teachers beliefs shared in chapter 7.

### **8.2.1. Evaluation of children's individual needs**

At both institutions I was told that every teacher was given a period of between four and six weeks at the beginning of each school year to assess and evaluate all the children in their new class, but particular attention was paid to CWSN, because of the belief that their learning needs often required greater attention (FN\_CS\_200910 & FN\_MS\_071010). The following four examples illustrate the sort of actions that were undertaken by some teachers at Millennium and Centenary in this initial evaluation stage.

Umbreen, coordinator/teacher from Millennium, points out how teachers share information at times of transition between classes:

We are allowed to discuss the profile of each child in a way that does not label the child. Teachers get time slots before the new school term ... when we are receiving children. (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

She explains that dedicated time at the beginning of the term at Millennium School is set aside in order to gain an understanding about the diverse learning needs of the children who will be moving into a new class. These discussions about children's profiles were intended to help teachers in considering the child's learning needs and obtaining more detailed information about their learning to date. Umbreen, along with some of the other teachers, stressed that they did not use these initial briefings to label the child. The core belief is that early planning for inclusion is important in providing inclusive pedagogy.

Sameen recalls how she starts with a new class by trying to get to know the children:

During the initial two-three weeks I just try and bring them closer to me emotionally, create a rapport with them. I just do not start immediately with teaching... I start from the things they have done in class two, this way both low and high achievers are able to participate. (Sameen interview at MS\_111010)

She encourages all her students to be contributing members during classroom learning. Her emphasis on and belief in active student participation enables her to support their emotional well-being, which she believes should be the first step in encouraging them to engage in learning activities regardless of their special needs.

Likewise, Alina and Asifa from Centenary School said that their early evaluations included monitoring the children's reading, writing and behaviour. Alina would make sure that she observed the remedial teacher during her sessions with some CWSN, who would be joining her class after the mid morning break in order to be better prepared to support them:

How she used to deal with them as she used to sit in the computer room and take her class when it was free... how she used to talk and teach CWSN... I learnt a lot... (Alina interview at \_CS 210910)

She explained that as a result of these observations she learnt how some specific needs of CWSN could be better addressed. Asifa gives an example of seeking specific advice from a colleague (child's former teacher) about a child's specific needs, which made her realise that she would have to encourage him and give him more time to finish his work.

I have this boy in my class, he has a grip problem. He needs help with his handwriting. He cannot hold his pencil, he trembles when he is writing. I sought help from Samreen, the KG [kindergarten] teacher; she was with him last year. (Asifa interview at CS\_200910)

In these examples, it seems that the teachers' beliefs about the need for early preparation and for greater awareness of the children's learning needs before transition were being taken seriously. Six of my respondents told me that during this initial period they were encouraged by the leaderships to discuss, observe and make suggestions about the needs of their new children (FN\_CS\_200910 & FN\_MS\_071010). Moreover, this period of time enabled teachers to assess informally their students' academic levels as well as their socialisation skills and to start to create a rapport with them, prior to introducing the curriculum formally. Bibby (2009) argues that these kinds of discussions and strategies can facilitate linkages between the teachers' pedagogical skills and the children's needs. However, teachers will only engage in these additional activities if they believe in their value.

### **8.2.2. Differentiation to cater for CWSN**

One of the key pedagogical tactics that is employed in meeting the individual needs of all learners, in particular, the needs of those CWSN, is an approach that favours some form of differentiation. For example, Westwood (2001) proposed that differentiation should take place through making changes to the curriculum and teaching techniques to ensure that learning is inclusive for CWSN. My analysis of the interview data revealed that many of my respondent teachers, based on their beliefs of the need to address learning differences in their mainstream classrooms, were applying differentiation in their teaching of the curriculum. Their differentiated instruction took several forms: modifications to the prescribed curriculum, giving extra time and attention, using different modes of assessment, changing seating arrangements, encouraging desirable behaviour,

teaching and resourcing for inclusion and progression to the next level. In this section, I not only identify the differentiation techniques employed by these teachers, but also critically evaluate, where appropriate, whether these are effective for working with CWSN and the challenges often confronted by these teachers in trying to match their beliefs with their practices. By so doing, I uncover some of the tensions that can arise when teachers pursue inclusion armed with beliefs about the value of and need for inclusion, but have limited resources to follow these beliefs through effectively.

#### **8.2.2.1. Modifications to the prescribed learning**

Farzeen gives an example of curriculum modification when she was working with a child, who had speech issues and was unable (or unwilling) to engage in verbal conversation:

If I have to ask her something I write it on the board and tell her to write her answer on the board and she does that. For reading I write some words and while I read, she would point to those words, in this way I know whether she understands or not. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

In this case, Farzeen altered the learning task so this child with selective mutism could communicate with her and hence, she was able to assess her learning. Despite her belief in conditional inclusion and being sceptical about it being implemented fully (see chapter 7), her practice indicated that she was trying her best to include this CWSN in the learning process. She believed that changing the medium (writing rather than talking) helped to include the child to take up the learning opportunity.

Maheen modified a learning task for a CWSN who she assessed as being less able to undertake abstract work in mathematics, where she was given the option of working on paper:

She cannot count on her fingers... She used paper to do her mental maths... she makes lines on paper, if it is 9+9 she draws 9 lines... (Maheen interview at CS\_210910)

Asma noticed that a child with sight problems who had poor eye hand coordination was unable to copy from the blackboard:

So I write instructions in his copy because I don't expect him to do it considering his problem... why waste time in routine tasks... where the answer is to be written I leave that for the child to complete... (Asma interview at MS\_251010)

It can be assumed from Maheen and Asma's examples that these two teachers had practically assessed the learning requirements of the CWSN to the best of their abilities. Based on their evaluations and their beliefs about inclusion, they made sure that they differentiated the tasks so that the two children in their classrooms were provided with alternatives so that they could complete the learning task.

Some respondents at both schools believed that in the past CWSN were overburdened with academic tasks that exerted too much pressure on these children, which they believed was unhelpful in relation to supporting their learning. Teachers reported a number of in-class tactics that they deployed to support CWSN. For example, Hameeda said:

If that child cannot copy all the work from the board, let him copy five sentences. Most importantly, he should get the concept right! If he is unable to finish his work on time, ask him to look at the questions on the board and just write the answers, no need to copy the questions... (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

As discussed in chapter 7, Hameeda held a strong conviction about the need to embrace inclusion and believed it to be the best possible way forward for CWSN. In the above extract, it appears that her belief led her to differentiate the learning task for a particular child in such a way that it minimised the logistical pressures of completion, while ensuring that he participated in the conceptual learning.

On reducing the challenge for some CWSN in a mathematics learning task, Asma commented:

I saw that they he was unable to do it after a certain stage, so I minimised the challenge... so it depends... if a CWSN is unable to complete six sums so I would give four sums or I will write the six sums for him from the blackboard and he will answer in his copy. (Asma interview at MS\_25/10/10)

It seems that Asma's belief in inclusion led her to take into account the learning requirements of a CWSN and this belief further transformed into her practice of differentiating or changing the task. Her view was that if the concept has been



grasped then it was not necessary for this particular child to perform as many examples as his peers.

Amal at Centenary School reports how for some struggling learners in her class:

I just make it easy for them... explain individually... I just give them sentences... simple sentences while the others are doing higher. I also give them two – three more examples... (Amal interview at CS\_09/09/10)

Hameeda, Asma and Amal used various forms of differentiation strategies, such as altering the learning challenge for some CWSN to make learning more accessible for them. These practices stemmed from their belief that such adaptations to the curriculum were needed for inclusion.

Although believing in conditional inclusion, Faiza talked about her concerns regarding differentiation:

when we have an activity for a language lesson I write a word bank on the black board, I can help him on the work I receive... add the missing word... how much can he write? ... (Faiza interview at CS\_07/09/2010)

During her differentiation exercise Faiza points to a trade off where she has to decide how much or how much less should be required of a CWSN and in return what should be the teacher's expectations.

Adeela on the other hand, proposed that the whole curriculum should be designed in such a way as to cater for a wide spectrum of learners:

We need to take care of Blooms taxonomy... questions should be catering to the needs of all children... like what, why, how... so all levels of achievers [CWSN] are able to answer. (Adeela interview at MS\_201010)

Bloom's taxonomy refers to a classification of the different learning objectives that teachers set for their students. It divides these educational objectives into cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Within the domains, learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels. A goal of Bloom's taxonomy is to motivate educators to focus on all three domains, thus creating a more [holistic](#) form of education. It would appear that Adeela's suggestion on a curriculum based on this taxonomy would be to focus on the holistic needs of the

children, calling for a more well thought out syllabus, which should have the right ingredients to embrace inclusion, rather than making ad hoc changes and adaptations to make learning accessible for some students – a much stronger and more positive approach to inclusion.

However, in relation to differentiation more generally, many of the teachers that I interviewed talked about the practices that they deployed in their classrooms to try to support inclusion. Some of them, like Hameeda, Asma and Amal, believed in inclusion, but were not specialists in the field and they had had no training to this effect. However, questions do need to be raised where teachers use a form of simplifying tasks for CWSN in such a way that the learning itself is reduced so much as to become meaningless. Similar issues have been raised in various studies, where researchers have argued that simplification of the curriculum may, at times, negatively affect the quality of the instruction received by CWSN (Ainscow, 2000: Davies, 2000: Westwood, 2001). Hehir and Katzman (2012) reiterate this concern and emphasise that schools and teachers, when applying a differentiated curriculum strategy, need to be conscious of not deliberately lowering their expectations of CWSN. Moreover, they argue that a differentiated curriculum is best supported by other collaborative measures, such as high expectations of all students from school leaders, instructional practices covering academic issues as well as behaviour and on-going professional development programmes to support teachers in carrying out these measures effectively, matters returned to in detail in the later sections of this chapter.

#### **8.2.2.2. Extra time and individual attention**

Extra time and individual attention were both used as a differentiation strategy by some of my respondents to support CWSN:

I used to give him more time, more attention like I would sit with him after school, make him flash cards; I would show him words through a window so he can focus on only that. I would give him more chances for show and tell, appreciate him more. So he would be a part of the class... (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

Here, it appears that Umbreen's belief in inclusion meant she was prepared to donate extra time beyond her own teaching time, allow for additional attention and to make some specially prepared visual aids to enable this particular child to

have access to the same learning as his peers. Despite being prepared to give this extra time, however, she also voiced her apprehension regarding her use of time, *'when there are CWSN... sometimes they need to be taken outside, explained to again and again'* (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010).

In order to support a particular child, her colleague Hameeda pointed out that she had to find extra time too to support a CWSN which she did with the help of:

The Nazra (recitation of Holy Quran) teacher... as they were reviewing the previous concepts at that time... so I took this child out in the resource room and made her do all those things again, which she could not understand in the class (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

Having a firm conviction about the importance of inclusion (see chapter 7), Hameeda made provision in her teaching schedule to provide extra support. This extra support could have provided a stimulus for this child to help her become more independent in handling her own learning and overcoming any obstacles hampering this process. Although her commitment to inclusion was reflected in her giving up her own resource time to support this child, Hameeda felt she was under pressure to complete the syllabus, a challenge: *'which meant giving extra teaching blocks as well as... give them [CWSN] individual attention... just to keep my class moving. The other 3 sections can't wait for only 1 section...* (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010). That is, she was expected to maintain the same regular learning pace in her classroom for all the other sections in the same class. To some extent, her additional work undertaken in her own time was a method to ensure the curriculum was covered as required; it was also a tactic in her pedagogy of inclusion.

Mahreen speaks about a struggling learner in her class:

He needs more help, more effort... I just gave him some attention... like after I have explained to the class. I ask him [Saad] do you understand. And if he says no, then I explain it to him again. (Mahreen interview at CS\_15/09/10)

Ghazal also says:

Some CWSN need extra attention... the child wants to do the task and is trying hard but he cannot manage writing on his own... I usually get a blank copy with just two – three lines of written work... though he is improving but he needs more individual attention and time, which is very

difficult to give as I have to teach the whole class (Ghazal interview at MS\_131010)

Overall, Umbreen, Hameeda, Mahreen and Ghazal's examples illustrate that they were trying to negotiate the best use of their teaching time (an issue also raised in chapter 7) to assist CWSN in their learning. It would appear that they believed that in some cases, CWSN can perform and achieve mainstream learning targets if they are given extra support with their learning. However, these examples also illustrate the tensions involved, where teachers were struggling between what they believed in [inclusion] and how at times this commitment made additional demands on their time. Indeed, many of the teachers whom I spoke with in both schools highlighted the sets of pressures that they faced such as syllabus completion, what they saw as large class sizes and the need to balance the different needs of all the children in their classrooms (discussed in chapter 7). Thus, using time to provide attention within and also sometimes outside the classroom (their own time) to support CWSN obviously contributed to the demands of teaching they experienced. Also, it could be argued too that sometimes their attempts to give more individual time or attention to a particular child might have resulted in their unintentionally stigmatising the child rather than promoting inclusion.

#### **8.2.2.3. Assessment modes**

Based on their beliefs in the value of inclusion, five of the respondents tried introducing differentiated assessment modes in their teaching, so that some CWSN were better supported in progressing academically alongside their peers. Saima reports how she differentiated the assessment for one child with a short attention span who was sometimes unable to grasp instructions whether verbal or written:

She could not understand the assessment format... so I just read the questions to her and I was asking her to answer and believe me she got 13 out of 15... 13 answers were correct... but when I had checked her earlier assessment... she had only gotten 2 correct answers. (Saima interview at MS\_07/10/10)

In this instance, it would appear that provision of these alternative modes of assessment (verbal rather than written) proved beneficial for this child as she was able to get good results when her needs were identified and effectively addressed.

Annie from Centenary told me that at class three level, during informal assessment, CWSN are assessed on their comprehension of the learning task, in order to check whether they have understood concepts after it has been modified:

I feel for the children who are weak [CWSN] there should be some work which has been done before in the class... after discussing with Rabia [principal] I made their assessment paper a bit shorter... (Annie interview at CS\_170910)

In this instance, and in consultation with the head teacher, the assessment method was replaced with a revised arrangement for some CWSN.

Amal gives another example:

This child was not able to do assessment sheet for class 1 so after consultation and advice [from the principal] I gave him the assessment sheet for KG11... which he was able to do... (Amal interview at CS\_09/09/10)

In the above cases, these three teachers were trying various differentiation techniques with some CWSN to assess their learning and to reduce some of the barriers to it in the process. However, it might be argued that the learning expectations were being reduced in some of these cases. The idea of offering less to some CWSN carries the risk of widening the learning gap between those with and those without special needs (Stanovich, 1986). These examples highlight the issue of whether there were any set achievement targets for these particular students or were all the children in the class expected to achieve the same level? The issue regarding whether some forms of differentiation in the curriculum for CWSN limits their learning experience has been raised in the literature (Tomlinson et al., 2003). At the same time, situations like these, where decisions have to be made about what type of differentiation is to be deployed, differentiation by outcome or differentiation by content, raise tensions for teachers when they are trying to juggle their beliefs about inclusion and equality.

Regarding assessing students learning in practical subjects like computers and sports, two teachers at Centenary gave examples from their classrooms. Alina, who taught computer studies, speaks about a child with a hearing impairment:

He was very sharp, but his main problem was hearing. He was not able to grasp the theoretical part, but practically after explanation he was able to do stuff. At times I used to write instructions for him and he would manage. So after discussing with the management I stopped assessing him on theory... He used to feel a lot more confident as practically he was very good in computers. (Alina interview at\_CS 210910)

Whereas, for sports Shireen explains:

We do it group wise. For, e.g. if we are showing them how to play throw ball, we do it for three weeks continuously and lead them towards scoring. To test their learning we arrange a match between two teams from the same class. As they play it is obvious if our hard work has been rewarded and whether they have understood or not. (Shireen interview at CS\_210910)

In practical situations like these, the use of different modes of assessment gave some CWSN opportunities to perform and also enhance their self-confidence. However, teachers may be more likely to look for tactics like those outlined by Shireen and Alina, if they are trying to be inclusive in their teaching.

#### **8.2.2.4. Seating arrangements**

Besides curriculum adaptations and giving extra time and attention to CWSN, three of my participants explained how they made arrangements in the classroom environment to help these children maintain their focus on their learning tasks. Farzeen had a child with hearing impairments in her class and was given the FM (personal frequency modulation) system to wear whilst conducting lessons, after being given guidelines on its usage:

I was supposed to wear the FM, the child was not supposed to sit under the fan so that the sound did not interfere and while speaking to her I was supposed to stand in front of her. All the time I used to wear the FM so she used to understand me, she could do lip reading and she could hear also with the hearing aid and the FM. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

Farzeen's efforts went beyond the wearing of the FM as she was also endeavouring to understand the child's speech in order to assist her in understanding the lesson in her class. Ensuring that this child sat where she could

see the teacher's lips and where there was less interference was an important part of the inclusion strategy.

To get a CWSN to stop roaming around the class and capture his attention on the learning task, Iffat explained *'I made him sit right in front of class...* (Iffat interview at MS\_121010). Likewise, her colleague Marium recalls having two children with hearing impairments, *'I made them sit in front,'* (Marium interview at MS\_211010) and Nausheen from Centenary on a child with attention deficit problems, *'I make him sit near me during my lesson so I can give him attention... and the class also doesn't get disturbed'* (Nausheen interview at CS\_080910). Sameen, speaking about a child with albinism-related low vision says, *'I used to seat him in the front... so that the rays of the sun do not fall on him'* (Sameen interview at MS\_111010).

These teachers, by making these physical adjustments, were trying to help students to avoid distraction during the lessons, maintain their focus on their learning and also help them to monitor whether the students had understood the instructions for various tasks. It is reasonable that a child with a hearing impairment or low vision should be sitting at the front of the class so as to be able to participate in the lesson. However, the decision by some teachers to make sure that CWSN sit next to them for different reasons, may be more questionable, if it involves taking a child out of the main body of the class, and if by so doing, this action promotes a sense of otherness/stigmatising rather than one of belonging in an inclusive classroom.

#### **8.2.2.5. Encouraging desirable behaviour**

Some of the teachers believed that by using a variety of behaviour stratagems they were able to maintain the instructional flow in their classrooms. If a child was distracted or disinterested, they refrained from calling out their name, so as to not to make them self-conscious and instead, used subtle methods to help them to refocus on the learning task. Shaista gives an example to explain how she supports positive classroom behaviour:

I know if I shout or scream, he will not work and his mood will be off. Touching him on the back, glaring at him or showing him the sign, these responses really work with him. (Shaista interview at MS\_131010)

She was sensitive to the child's needs in responding to his behaviour patterns in ways that helped him maintain his focus on the learning task. Her colleague Hameeda says, *'now I try to use my gestures more, like the look in my eyes...* (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010). Marium alters her language, *'I don't use the word DON'T, I will use "I think it is better to sit properly on the chair",* (Marium interview at MS\_211010). These sorts of tactics involving unobtrusive reactions to minor disruptions seemed to be helping as they did not upset the progress of the lesson. As these teachers explained, these responses were all aimed at helping CWSN and their peers to focus on the task at hand and to refrain from exhibiting disruptive behaviour in the classroom. It was their way of communicating to a particular student what behaviour was acceptable and what was not. The above examples indicate that these teachers were thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of all children and especially CWSN in that they were trying for whole class inclusion and attempting to reduce stigmatisation.

#### **8.2.2.6. Teaching and resources for inclusion**

As another form of differentiation, the teachers used a variety of resources and created some of their own in order to make inclusion more possible both inside and outside their mainstream classrooms. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 6, library and home learning corners were provided in all sections of class 1 and 2 at Centenary School. These kinds of provision are rare in Pakistan, even in 'good' private schools. Asifa explains how these corners work in engaging all children regardless of their abilities/disabilities:

We have a home corner and a library corner in the classes [1 & 2]... so when they are bored or if they have finished their work or when they don't want to work I tell them to go and have some fun in the home corner or library corner in the class where we have puzzles, books, blocks, etc... (Asifa interview at CS\_200910)

These library and home corners, as Asifa expressed, were an essential part of the classroom environment and for her, as well as her colleagues, the objectives of having them were multi-fold. In their view, besides providing the children the incentive of free play, their cognitive, behaviour and social skills were being developed, new knowledge was being acquired informally and it also proved to be an incentive to finish the lesson task in class. Children of all aptitudes benefited,



as Asifa commented, even the shy ones were happy reading quietly in the library corner. Moreover, these corners helped create a stress-free environment where learning through play was happening. Bailey (2007:120) described children's play as a form of self-directed learning, which follows a state of deep connection and engagement. He identified it as being a creative learning exchange between mind, body, and circumstance into one integrated and healthy whole. Playing or engaging in these corners, as the above evidence indicates, can be taken as good classroom practice where CWSN and their peers all seemed to be benefiting in an inclusive manner. Indeed, this is an example where good practice is for *all* the children in the classroom and not just different provision for children identified as CWSN.

Classrooms at Millennium School offered resources to support learning beyond more formal patterns of instruction which generally dominate in all schools in Pakistan: *'usually at the back of our primary classrooms we have extra worksheets for various subjects... either they can draw or do those work sheets...'* (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010). The teachers were providing students with an extra incentive to finish as early as they could, for then they could become engaged in an activity of their choice. These additional classroom resources seemed to be supporting good learning and hopefully promoting inclusion.

However the lack of some resources for CWSN often created challenging situations in mainstream classrooms. Iffat gives an example of a child with a hearing impairment wearing a hearing aid and usually having good concentration, sometimes taking a lot longer to complete his work. As she says:

Noise in the classroom disturbs him... he lowers down his hearing aid volume... he often takes it off... doesn't want to wear it back. (Iffat interview at MS\_121010)

In the absence of sound proof classrooms, the noise in the classroom was distracting and made this child with a hearing impairment lose concentration on the learning task. This can frequently be a problem, even with the very best hearing aids, as feedback and background noises can be extremely wearing and frustrating and thus, there is a temptation for hearing aid users to turn them off from time to time in order to reduce the pressure.

Scarcity of adequate resources worked as a stimulant for Nausheen when she used the outdoors for a CWSN who had problems with handwriting:

I used to take him outdoors and he was given a stick to trace out letters and numbers in sand, this was followed by a pencil. He had great difficulty writing the figure 2. I gradually worked with him and towards the end... he could write his name and could recognise quite a few letters... I had made quite a bit of material for him... I also made a sand tray for him to work with... (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

Nausheen brought innovation to her teaching by using the outdoor environment and natural materials to initiate her student's learning. It should be noted that Centenary had only one playground which was often converted into an exercise, taekwondo or other sports field as per requirement and so there were limited opportunities for her to access the playground and pursue such activities.

For a child with low vision in Sameen's class, in the absence of any assistive technology devices that could be used in lessons, she had:

photocopied the text book in a larger font... which aided him in reading... and during the second term that child took first position in the competition for good handwriting. (Sameen interview at MS\_111010)

Use of classroom corners, extra worksheets, creating resources as well as using the outdoors enriched the learning experience of all the students, but in particular, proved to be important for students who were struggling with their learning in traditional instructional formats and/or who were CWSN. These teachers were using or creating these extra resources to promote learning for all children and hopefully, giving CWSN more opportunities to access learning through different media and through experiences of play.

Although these private schools did have some electronic resources, such as computers, printers and photocopiers, they did not have any assistive technology aids common in Western contexts. In the case where the teacher was supplied with an FM system for a child with a hearing impairment, this aid was provided by the parents and not the school. The lack of assistive technologies in the schools was probably because the school leaderships did not consider it their responsibility to purchase this specialist equipment, but rather, placed emphasis

on spending their limited funds on resources that could benefit all the children. This meant that the onus was on the parents to buy support equipment for their CWSN, which they might not have always been able to afford. In addition, given the absence of disability legislation in Pakistan, as discussed in chapter 2, there is no pressure on schools to cater for CWSN in any way, even if they were cognisant of the need to do so. Indeed, my observations suggest that many of the teachers and their leaders were unaware of the electronic gadgets/software that could be used to support learning, even if these had been more readily available.

#### **8.2.2.7. Progression to the next level**

Four teachers from the two schools believed that, for CWSN, progression to the next class in the absence of reaching the required performance level was problematic. In Mahreen's opinion, Century is *'too flexible, even if the child does not do well they do promote to the next class'* (Mahreen interview at CS\_150910) and Mercy pointed out that there is, *'No pressure from management for the CWSN to perform'* as the child always moves up to the next class (Mercy interview at CS\_160910). Similarly, teachers from Millennium said that often CWSN would be advanced to the next class, because they were assessed in a different way to their peers (FN\_MS\_041010).

The above accounts reveal the tension between the criteria for promotion to the next class in an educational context where this transition is usually based on the level of performance. Some teachers argued that if the achievement level of a CWSN was not up to the standard achievement criteria expected of the whole class then this would put extra pressure on the next class teacher. Despite these two schools welcoming CWSN into their community and their parents being grateful in most cases as other schools are not so supportive, there is still a financial contract between both parties. This means that if the child in question is refused the right to advance and if the parents are able to find an alternative placement, then the school will lose funds. Consequently, the school is under pressure to progress students. This is an intractable dilemma because it could be that if children only moved up to the next class on the basis of their academic performance, then some would never move at all. They would lose their friendships and peer-group relationships. If children are moved up on the basis of

having understood aspects of the curriculum that is then extended, they may find themselves in a situation where they are less able to cope.

This section has described some of the main forms of differentiation that my participant teachers engaged with in order to support their beliefs that CWSN should be provided with opportunities to have accessible learning provision (Roy et al., 2012). That is, they were endeavouring to make the curriculum more widely accessible and to this end many participated in ‘differentiating’ the learning tasks to cater for CWSN’s learning requirements (Roy et al., 2012). Some good practices were put in place to enhance learning opportunities for CWSN through differentiation by modifications in the curriculum, providing extra time and attention, using a variety of assessment modes, altering seating arrangements in the classroom, encouraging desirable behaviour, teaching and resourcing for inclusion and considering issues related to progression to the next class. Yet, at the same time these practices do raise a number of issues where in some instances it appeared that some CWSN may have had their educational programmes reduced or simplified to such a level where they could become less challenging and perhaps trivial experiences. Some concerns also have to be highlighted in relation to activities that might be singling out children with special needs who may feel picked upon or stigmatised by being treated differently.

In many Western contexts, there is a lot of disability advocacy and CWSN are often given statements with a lot of guidance on the goals and objectives for their learning (Ainscow et al. 2004). There is no such provision in Pakistan, so by and large it was left to these teachers and their leaderships to decide the best ways to deal with some of these special needs. What does need to be underlined is that most of these teachers did have a belief in inclusion and were trying, in sometimes difficult circumstances, to meet the needs of their CWSN.

### **8.3. Collaborative practice within the school in support of CWSN**

18 of the respondents believed that inclusion in their mainstream classrooms was being promoted through active collaboration between the various stakeholders. They identified various patterns of collaboration at three levels: student with student, teacher with parents and cooperation between teachers. In this section, I

discuss each pattern and how some of the teachers' beliefs assisted them in forming and/or being party to these collaborations.

### **8.3.1. Student with student collaboration**

Hameeda from Millennium emphasised her belief that an environment for cooperation and respect has to be created if inclusion is to be embraced at all levels. Her leadership team had informed her about a particular child who wrote letter reversals, read in the reverse order and was also reluctant to read in front of his peers as they made fun of him. She explains how she was able to address these issues:

We have a chapter [*diversity*] in our English text. So I took up that chapter, whenever I need support in my classes I take up that chapter. We talked about diversity and how boring it would be if everybody was the same with the same qualities, if everybody drew or read the same way... then I gradually gave them this concept that we have to respect differences and each other no matter what. (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

Hameeda held the conviction that teachers have to develop a classroom environment, where there is mutual harmony and trust and where all students regardless of their abilities or disabilities are encouraged to perform. By engaging all her students in a dialogue about human rights and the acceptance of difference, she was able to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and belonging in her classroom where a CWSN was able to earn encouragement and respect from both peers and the teacher. She emphasised the role of peers in situations like these, *'peer support is a must, the child cannot work if he or she is stressed or does not trust the partner who they are sitting with'* (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010).

12 of the participants commented that mixed ability groups were often favoured in classrooms until the children reached the ages of 9 - 10 years at Millennium and Centenary, to enhance student collaboration in order to address learning differences more effectively. Marium explains this approach:

Actually when they come from starters [section from pre-nursery till class2], they are used to sitting in groups... I feel it should be the same [group sitting] in higher classes also as we do a lot of cooperative learning styles work... I have always done mixed ability grouping in my classes... children get a lot of help from each other in this way... (Marium interview at MS\_131010)

Alina reports how she made use of deliberate grouping practices in her computer studies class at Centenary to promote collaboration and inclusion:

What I usually do is make a pair of one above average and an average or below average child... so they learn from each other, although sometimes they do not feel comfortable with each other. I have observed that the sharp ones, at times, take advantage and do not want to share with their partner, e.g. they will do everything, use the mouse etc. To counter this I make the sharp child responsible to talk and share ideas with their partner and take turns after such and such a time. So giving this responsibility is a strategy that works, most of the times... (Alina interview at CS 210910)

Her example indicates that CWSN and their peers were given structured opportunities to learn from each other and value each other's contribution. Maheen says, *'I have mixed ability seating... sharp and talkative child with a shy one... who has started talking and participating...* (Maheen interview at CS\_210910) and Rakhshanda considered, *'mixed ability grouping works well... they support and assist each other,'* (Rakhshanda interview CS\_220910).

Nausheen has more to say on the peer support aspect:

Some children are very friendly and caring and like to share and help. A few children have leadership qualities, *Aunty can I help this child, he has not finished his work?* Yes then I do allow them to help each other. There are some children in the class who do not like anybody's interference, but I try to get them to interact... (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

She explained that by allowing her students with leadership qualities to help their peers, this created a congenial atmosphere in her classroom with students having a positive influence on each other. This was because the children formed collaborative partnerships with each other, which allowed them to respect each other's diverse natures and this in turn helped both teachers and students to promote inclusion. However, it must be underlined that these strategies will only be deployed where a teacher has a belief in the value of these tactics and wants to promote inclusion.

By contrast, two respondents had concerns about this form of grouping. In Faiza's opinion:

If I do mixing, then one child will try and become like another child... pair one bright student with an average or below average one and then see the difference... change was rare... what I feel is that eventually they

start copying the smart one... this problem led me to change their places.  
(Faiza interview at CS\_07/09/2010)

Faiza was unable to see the benefits of this kind of grouping and according to her, it created a source of dependency amongst students. Saima thinks that mixed ability grouping is beneficial, but she also has similar concerns about dependency, *'what happens is that if the child is a low achiever then he/she might start depending on his friends...'* (Saima interview at MS\_071010). In these two teachers' views, a balance has to be maintained when undertaking mixed attainment grouping and they both thought that any so-called dependency has to be minimised. The problem here is that it may be the case that both of these teachers have not understood peer-peer learning in the same way as Nausheen. Instead of seeing an opportunity for collaboration, they were concerned with 'dependency' and so they do not recognise the potential inclusion opportunities in this form of grouping for learning that would engage all those involved.

Two of my respondents at Millennium also used cooperative learning strategies as one of their learning techniques in their mainstream classrooms. Marium describes how:

We do Ginn series [a cooperative learning tool], it has steps in sequence... I don't do it in a very hard and fast way. It depends how the children are responding to it. (Marium interview at MS\_131010)

Umbreen further provides an example of how she placed one CWSN in a cooperative learning situation:

I would pair him with a child who was more caring than others... I would see to it that he is sitting with someone who is smart, sharp and caring. Not someone who would not help. In a cooperative learning environment he has to contribute than his partner would help him in a subtle way. (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

Adopting various forms of cooperative learning strategies in their classrooms helped Marium and Umbreen to 'create a classroom community of learners', where each child contributed towards the learning community (Ferguson, 2008:115). However, when using such strategies certain essential factors need to be taken in account (Calderon, 1999). Firstly, the structure of the learning group is an important aspect, whereby it is crucial that each child becomes a contributing

member (Calderon, 1999). Secondly, Wang (1998) points out that the nature of the contributions may in some circumstances involve lowering the expectations from CWSN in the group. Ainscow (2000) and Westwood (2001) regard cooperative learning as an important strategy for teachers as it moves the learning away from individualism or competition towards group endeavours and real collaboration that are consistent with inclusion. However, it can also be the case that a cooperative learning group is not appropriate for some CWSN, because they might be less able to work in this way (Calderon, 1999). So, while cooperative learning can play an important role in promoting inclusion, as my data illustrate, teachers have to believe in this approach and they have to understand why it can be supportive for all those involved.

### **8.3.2. Teacher and parent collaboration**

10 teachers from Millennium and nine from Centenary argued that working collaboratively with parents was fundamental to promoting the inclusion of CWSN. The first practical step taken to form a collaborative partnership between the teachers and the parents was to hold parent teacher meetings, which was the norm at both Millennium and Centenary schools (FN\_CS\_270910 & FN\_MS\_141010). These meetings were sometimes held each week, sometimes monthly or as and when the situation required, which could be more than once a week. Having such regular meetings is not the norm in most mainstream private schools in Pakistan (Azad, 2005). In this subsection, through some illustrative quotes I will explore the various ways teacher parent partnerships were being promoted to achieve the goal of inclusion.

Home support for the child by their parents was another positive outcome stemming from the parent teacher meetings:

Usually we don't give homework but I give them [CWSN] various exercises as homework on a daily basis, so the class work is being done at home also to bring about an improvement in these children [CWSN]. (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910)

Some parents willingly assisted their children at home with their work after creating a connection with the school and having day to day feedback from the teachers about their children's progress.



Afsheen talks about minimising reading challenges for a CWSN through engaging with their parents:

I kept on keeping record and writing comments in the child's home diary for the parents so that they would also know what is going on and how would they help their child... fill up reading logs ... I think that is really a challenge for me. So I used to call the parents describing reading log to them and ask them to follow it. I have seen that those students who are really following the reading log, they improve much faster than... I talked to the child and wrote a note in the diary that really helped. (Afsheen interview MS\_081010)

Irfana speaks about some of her students who have issues with identifying words and letters and decoding and said, *'I encourage them to read at home... reading regularly at home with parents does help'* (Irfana interview at MS\_06/10/10). Involving the parents in their children's learning indicates the importance placed by these teachers on this kind of collaboration in order to facilitate academic progression for some CWSN.

At Centenary, some of my respondents reported that teachers encouraged some CWSN to take up home diary writing. The diaries were used as a means for the students and their parents to be able to review and revise the work undertaken during class time. Asifa reflects on one occasion she sought parental involvement, when her student had handwriting and time management issues:

I suggested giving the children a small notebook or a diary and asking them to write a page every day or 4-5 lines or one sentence at home. That page or sentence could be chosen by the child or the parent. Actually I got a very good feedback from the parents and the children... it really worked well. (Asifa interview at CS\_200910)

At Millennium, Sameen reported that she often used home diaries to show appreciation of the students' good work, writing such remarks as, *'Hamza [pseudonym for a CWSN] is doing very well in class and the teacher is very happy. I am proud of you Hamza!'* (Sameen interview at MS\_111010). By making a note about the child's good work, Sameen explained that her student would also be praised at home.

These examples indicate that parental involvement was often set up to progress learning outcomes for some CWSN. Despite some of the above arrangements also

helping to alleviate some of the pressure on teachers, Hameeda expresses concern about the demands being placed on some parents:

I used to feel that we are asking too much from them [CWSN] as well as their parents... we got parents who were ready to work with their children but how much? If a mother has four children and one child has dyslexia as I know of a case... (Hameeda interview at MS\_111010)

Having to cooperate and involve themselves effectively in their children's learning journey might often be overwhelming for some parents (Ferguson, 2008). Farzeen from Centenary recalls her experience in one case where the parents were unable to accept that their child had a special need:

You know this movie of Aamir Khan [Indian film actor] *Taare Zameen Par* [ stars on earth], when the mother saw this movie she realised that her son is also facing the same problem, so she accepted this fact... but the father still wasn't accepting it. I used to have meetings with her, then she came and she told me that 'I have a feeling that my child is having the same problem as that boy'. So of course then extra attention was given to him at home, I used to make him stay back in the break to give him extra help... (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

In other words, the movie played an important role in the mother's recognition and acceptance of the child's special need (dyslexia), after which she willingly offered to help her son with his schoolwork. Farzeen was trying her best to support this particular child's special need by giving him extra time and working on parental awareness and acceptance. One of the tactics that she used was when she held the child back during break time. While this extra time might have helped this child academically, this kind of differentiation could also have had a negative effect in that it was denying the child the free time that the other children had at their disposal as well as signalling rather publicly to his peers that was in need of extra help.

Farzeen's actions in working to inform parents about a child's educational needs might not match the practices of some northern hemisphere countries. In such countries there are support systems and early intervention programmes in place, so parents are likely to be well informed about their child's special needs and they themselves are then the ones who advise the teachers and the schools about what to do to support their child (LeRoy & Simpson, 1996). Furthermore, in many western contexts when CWSN are admitted to school, an intervention programme

is already in place. In the case of Pakistan and many other South Asian contexts, there is a culture that can make parents take the position that ‘nothing is wrong with my child’ or ‘it’s my fault’ (Alur & Bach, 2010:75), thus pushing parents towards self-blaming or denial of any disability. Islam (the state religion of Pakistan) portrays disability as neither a punishment nor a blessing from God, whereas the general societal outlook is more inclined towards it being seen as punishment for the sins of the parents (Bazna & Hatab, 2005). In the absence of intervention systems and support services to help parents in accepting and learning about their child’s special needs, it is often the case that the onus is left on the school and teacher to take on this role. Even in ‘good’ private schools in Pakistan, support systems for CWSN are rarely provided (Azad, 2005), but Millennium and Centenary (see chapter 6, section 6.2) had begun to offer various kinds of support for parents, although this was still somewhat low key.

Some of the respondents at Centenary explained that the transition issues for some CWSN were handled through teacher-parent collaboration. As Farzeen recounts:

The mother used to come after a week or 15 days and she would find out what I was doing in class. We used to discuss, she was very cooperative and it helped both of us especially me to understand the child's needs and solve the teething issues especially beginning of the term. (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910)

Similarly, Nausheen, who taught class 2 at Centenary, told me that she had weekly meetings with the mothers of two CWSN in her class to help ease their transition and also to get updates on the students’ progress at home. During one of these weekly meetings it was decided that one particular CWSN’s homework would be a follow up of the class work as the mother felt that an exercise given by the teacher, *‘has more value and he would abide by it more...’* (Nausheen interview at CS\_160910).

As Henderson and Mapp (2002) found, the willingness of parents to be a part of systemic change is key in the development of inclusive options for CWSN. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that no one party is left with a great burden when rolling out this process; it is important that the responsibilities are shared. Nonetheless, in the examples that I have detailed above, what comes

across is the way in which the teachers in both schools believed that working with parents was a fundamental lever in promoting inclusive education in their schools.

### **8.3.3. Cooperation between teachers**

Eight participants from both schools believed that mutual cooperation between teachers was an essential requirement with regards to being an inclusive school. They spoke about the various ways in which teachers cooperated and undertook team work in dealing with special needs. Cooperation amongst teachers was also analysed in Chapter 6 regarding the development of a whole school ethos. This chapter focuses on teachers' beliefs about inclusion influencing pedagogical practices, and so I now explore the ways that my respondent teachers collaborated when undertaking their lesson planning for inclusion.

At Millennium School, Umbreen reported that planning for English, mathematics and science in the primary school was undertaken by a team of teachers teaching these subjects. More specifically, these lessons were planned within the team on a rotational basis with one teacher planning for the whole unit of six weeks. However, although only one teacher drew up the written plans, each member of the team had an input:

It is good because everybody gets an opportunity to plan with each one's input; the team goes over the planning and makes suggestions... as per the needs of the students... (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

The team's planning discussions were also aimed at addressing special needs in the classroom. The subject coordination committee meetings were used as a platform where:

We openly discuss issues... like some of my children have not understood the concept, so can we do it again? Or in another way and the ideas are discussed... this is very good learning. Even new teachers... have brilliant ideas we do learn from each other. (Mariam interview at MS\_211010)

At this school, the evidence suggests that most staff accepted that lesson planning was a joint responsibility, during which they would exchange ideas about the best ways to address the diverse learning needs of their students. Afsheen, a reading teacher for English at Millennium, reported that she plans her lessons through discussions with class teachers, who have identified children who have problems

with reading, *'they really need help [CWSN] with reading... I then work out strategies and make resources to work with them'* (Afsheen interview MS\_081010).

Although as a general rule lesson planning was a collaborative activity at Millennium, Ghazal was opposed to it being so. She felt lesson planning should be undertaken individually rather than as a group task and gave her reasons why:

planning can be given to one teacher to seek the individuality of the teacher... to see her output... how does she plan individually... how much active learning is taking place... students shouldn't get bored... I try and switch strategies... play a game... focus more on planning with stories... (Ghazal interview at MS\_131010)

For Ghazal, collective planning at times did not leave room for her to bring innovations to her classroom teaching. She often felt restricted by group planning as she was unable to offer some techniques that she believed could create an active learning atmosphere in her classroom.

In Centenary School, being a smaller institution compared to Millennium, some teachers did their lesson planning in pairs on a rotational basis as there were just two divisions of each primary class. Those teachers taking specialist subjects like sports etc., planned individually, but after consultation with the class teachers. Mahreen, teaching art and language development at Centenary, told me her weekly planning evolved from discussion with the class teachers:

About the issues and areas which some students need to work on... students while speaking miss words... some mumble words... or stammer... (Mahreen interview at CS\_150910)

In the above mentioned case, she recalled that she arranged for an elocution contest between classes at assembly time, which provided a platform for all students, especially the ones struggling with speech and language issues, to perform in front of the school. In terms of inclusion this could be regarded as a questionable practice as some children might be laughed at or made fun of, which would reinforce a sense of difference rather than enhancing their self confidence. Hence, careful thought needs to be given when teachers' are planning such activities as to whether they will promote inclusion or alternatively, enhance some forms of exclusion. Rakhshanda, who takes art classes at Centenary, explains that

collaboration in her experience with class teachers is important, because it provides her with information about *'the type of work students can do... considering some of the special needs'*. (Rakhshanda interview CS\_220910).

Eight teachers reported from both institutions that they usually carried out lesson evaluations at the end of each lesson and further modifications were usually added to the next teaching session (FN\_MS\_051010 and FN\_CS\_270910). The lesson adaptations that were carried out by some respondents reflect Freeman's (1996) findings that lesson planning should be seen as an instructional activity that can be adapted upon reflection by teachers in order to reach the learning objectives for their diverse group of learners. In the focal schools, there was promotion of collaboration, which most of the teachers believed was essential for effective inclusion. These cooperative arrangements to discuss the various challenges the stakeholders faced would appear to be in line with the notion of a 'community of practice' (Wenger, 1998:06). Furthermore, effective cooperation between the home and school assisted CWSN with their learning by surmounting many of the obstacles that they encountered in the mainstream schools environment as well as at home.

#### **8.4. Teachers views about professional development opportunities**

In this chapter, I have provided evidence that those teachers who have a commitment towards promoting inclusion in their classrooms frequently make changes to their pedagogy particularly through modes of differentiation. However, sometimes progress in terms of inclusive pedagogy can be limited owing to a lack of up to date awareness of developments in the field and a lack of effective teacher training and consequently, in this section the theme of professional development opportunities available to the respondents as well as the shortfalls, are discussed.

29 respondents from Millennium and Centenary Schools said that they believed in the importance of teacher training in helping teachers to address special needs in their mainstream classrooms, but they had varying views about the professional development opportunities on offer. At Millennium School, teacher attendance was compulsory for the once a week after school training sessions: *'The*

*professional development workshops we have at the schools, even though I dislike them a lot, they are still beneficial'* (Shaista interview at MS\_131010). The reason for some teachers' reluctance towards the training programmes seemed to be the extra time they had to allocate after school for these sessions.

Umbreen, as a coordinator and teacher at Millennium, explained that for the last three years the professional development sessions have been taking place for every section of the school and that these have helped teachers develop professionally. In particular, she believes this has had an impact on her own teaching:

These sessions have helped me, yes, and I can relate more now. Now when I am in a class facing a difficulty or a challenge [CWSN] I can share that challenge in a professional development training or workshop. We can share reflections... teaching is all about this, we have problems and we have success stories as well and we do share those as well during our sessions. (Umbreen interview at MS\_131010)

These sessions were instrumental in providing the teachers with a platform to exchange ideas regarding working with CWSN as well as giving them opportunities to raise their concerns where they felt progress was not being made with particular students with special needs. (Obviously not all these training sessions centred directly on meeting the needs of CWSN but their needs would arise in the context of the topic being discussed – for example if English was being discussed, the need to support literacy for different children would be covered).

Besides having in-house training, Millennium offered its teachers opportunities to attend various external professional development sessions. They had a consistent flow of professionals from outside who contributed to the training sessions at the school (FN\_MS\_071010). However, as Hameeda explains on the provision of training opportunities, there was no compulsion and teachers could be selective on the areas of training:

Over the years a lot of chances Alhamdulillah [Grace of God] have been provided by the school. Usually we are not bound to go to all the training sessions, we can decide on our own, based on our need. (Hameeda interview at MS\_071010)

The majority of my respondents at Millennium reported that they have in the past and at present been offered good professional development opportunities (FN\_MS\_051010). However, there was still a need for more specialised training in special educational needs. Afsheen, a teacher for nearly 20 years, recalls that once she had identified a child in her class who exhibited signs of dyslexia, which was hampering his academic progress and she wanted to help him:

I could not do much with him... I didn't know many strategies... it would have helped of course if I had some training... I really want to because I need to... (Afsheen interview MS\_081010)

Similar sentiments were shared by her colleagues Marium and Saima, both teachers with more than 10 years of teaching and training experience, who drew attention to the need for more specialised training, for both less and more experienced teachers to understand and respond appropriately to the various special needs present in their mainstream classrooms (also discussed in chapter 7).

Farzeen from Centenary expresses similar views: *'I have had training but I still am not satisfied. You know I feel a teacher should be trained properly otherwise it becomes very difficult to practise inclusion'* (Farzeen interview at CS\_180910).

Asifa and Alina, despite reporting that they had received some teacher training in the area of special needs, stressed the need for more specialised training to deal with certain special needs in their mainstream classrooms (FN\_CS\_200910). Faiza, Amal and Rakhshanda reported that there had not been a consistent training programme for them. In Faiza's case, the last training that had taught her appropriate teaching strategies for inclusion took place, *'two years ago'* (Faiza interview at CS\_070910). Amal said that she and her colleague, who also taught class 1, in the absence of a consistent training programme, used the guide books (provided with the course books) and the internet to plan their inclusive lessons and sometimes sought help from the principal. Her colleague Rakhshanda also used the internet to plan her art lessons, as well as getting support from the class teachers at Centenary, who assisted her in planning so as to be able to address special needs in her art lessons. Whilst she had undergone initial training as an art teacher, she told me that:



I have only attended two workshops to enhance my art teaching during the ten years that I have been at Centenary. (Rakhshanda interview CS\_220910)

Ghazanfar was of the opinion that he does not need more training on the music side, but regarding teaching CWSN, *'I would certainly like to attend some courses if the opportunity comes, '* (Ghazanfar interview at CS\_27/09/10). His colleague Asjad comments:

Yes I need more training... if I want to continue in this field... dealing with all kinds of learning needs... need more information... more strategies... (Asjad interview at CS\_130910)

At Centenary School, the majority of my 15 respondents pointed to various gaps in the professional development opportunities being provided at their school. These respondents had difficulties in providing effective support to the CWSN in their classrooms and often felt it was their lack of training and lack of the appropriate skills, which led to their inability to cater as well as they would have liked for all learning differences. Indeed, to some degree, it could be that their lack of education in this area underpinned the beliefs of some teachers in this school that inclusion was not the right path for a lot of CWSN (as discussed in Chapter 7).

The majority of the respondents in both schools highlighted their need not just for more opportunities for teacher training, they also stressed that they needed specialist training so that they could deal better with the special needs demands in their mainstream classrooms. It has been argued that for inclusion to be effective, teacher training should involve help with lesson planning and instruction on appropriate teaching methods, which will enable teachers to cater for a range of special needs in mainstream classrooms (Mittler, 2012). Research indicates that mainstream and even special education teachers often feel inadequately trained to support CWSN in mainstream classrooms (Lieber et al., 2000 & Burstein et al., 2004). In sum, my teachers recognised that they needed training and support in order to boost their competence and confidence when undertaking the education of CWSN, and in working to promote inclusion; training that is context sensitive and addresses individual needs (Williams, 2007; Jager, 2013).

## **8.5. Summary and discussion**

The focus of this chapter has been on the ways in which teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion influence their pedagogical practices. In the course of my analysis it emerged that the teachers did hold positive beliefs about the need for inclusion and they were often working to ensure that all their students could access learning using a variety of 'differentiation' techniques (Westwood, 2001). At times their beliefs about inclusion were transformed into supportive teaching practices, where they were able to address the special needs of children in their teaching through various modifications. However, several teaching situations in the excerpts presented in this chapter revealed how their practices were based on what they thought was the best that they could offer in their circumstances. Although some of these modifications were useful, there has to be some concern that some 'reactive' rather than 'proactive' differentiation practices might not always lead to effective learning outcomes (Tomlinson et al., 2003:122). Some practices that stigmatise children because of overt differentiation (keeping the child in for extra help at playtimes) might be the only way that the teacher can manage to work with the child, but the outcomes might not be productive at all.

In several cases, as the data have indicated, the participants held strong beliefs about the need for the inclusion of CWSN, but were unable to put these beliefs into practice due to contextual barriers such as the lack of time, inadequate resources and insufficient skills development. In particular, the majority of those interviewed from the Centenary School expressed the view that they needed more specialist training, if they were to be effective when working with CWSN in diverse learning environments. If some of these shortcomings were to be addressed, it would make it easier for those staff who wanted inclusion to work to make their beliefs more of a reality in practice.

Based on their beliefs, some respondents were making efforts towards collaboration between the various stakeholders aimed at creating a community of practice to promote inclusion. It was evident from the data that the teachers in these two schools were being resourceful in the absence of large spending budgets. Although having private high fee structures, these schools still faced resource scarcity, with no financial support from the state. Moreover, in the

absence of the sort of legislative framework found in the West regarding disability, there was no requirement in these schools, as anywhere else in Pakistan, to prioritise the needs of CWSN. However, it is evident that many of my participating teachers believed that their schools should do as much as they could to support CWSN in accordance with their mission statements (see chapter 6) and the findings have shown that in the majority of cases, to some extent, their practice reflects these beliefs.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

#### **9.1. Introduction**

More than two decades have passed since inclusive education was placed on the global policy agenda and became the subject of a set of international documents that promoted the rights of all children to receive an education (UNESCO, 1994, 2000, 2004). In the case of Pakistan, inclusive education is still largely taken to mean a form of education for 'children with disabilities or special needs' (GoP, 2002). The Government of Pakistan has been a signatory to many of the international documents that have called for inclusion as a basic human right, but in reality little whole scale progress has been made in this area of educational provision. In a country like Pakistan achieving the goals of inclusion is challenging owing to factors, such as political turmoil and complex socioeconomic and cultural conditions, where there are more than eight million 'out of school' children (primary and secondary levels), the second highest in the world and a country where the education of CWSN is not a priority (UNESCO, 2013).

There is a paucity of empirical research on inclusive education in Pakistan, where, according to estimates, (AKU-IED, 2003; Rieser, 2008, 2012) less than 1% of CWSN are being educated in special schools as there simply is not enough provision – even if these schools were desirable. Rieser's (2008, 2012) research has shown that what provision does exist for CWSN predominantly is undertaken by private institutions rather than schools run by the government. Those studies that have been undertaken in the area of inclusive education tend to explore what can be done at the macro-policy level to encourage and support inclusion, but there are no studies to my knowledge that have focused down on in-schools practices.

For this reason, I decided to explore and document the development of inclusive practices towards CWSN in two mainstream private primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan. I decided to conduct this investigation in private schools as, in that context, the private sector has emerged as a positive setting for educating CWSN

(UNICEF, 2003a; Azad, 2004; Pasha, 2012). These two schools were selected on the basis of their having children enrolled who have special needs who study with their peers in mainstream classrooms. Second, I chose to work in two schools so that I would be able to work with a comprehensive sample of teachers. The overarching objective of my study in these two urban schools was to explore and document the policies and practices that they had developed that were aimed at promoting and implementing the inclusion of CWSN. This qualitative study was undertaken through conducting semi structured interviews with 30 teacher participants, 15 from each school and the collection of field notes, where the objectives were to elicit teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion as well as to explore critically the nature of their practices.

The research questions that provided the focus for this study are as follows:

- 1) What are the teachers' views of the existing policies and practices that promote inclusion in two mainstream schools in Karachi?
- 2) What are these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion?
- 3) How do these beliefs impact upon their pedagogical practices?

The purpose of this final chapter is first to review the main findings of the study so as to address these research questions. I then detail some of the limits of this work before turning to identify the contributions that are made by this study towards understanding the complexities and situated factors involved in making inclusion happen in practice. Subsequently, I consider some proposals for further research and finally, I include a personal reflection on my learning journey whilst I was carrying out the work for this thesis.

## **9.2. What are the teachers' views of the existing policies and practices that promote inclusion in two mainstream schools in Karachi?**

The findings also revealed that the admissions policy at Millennium and Centenary schools did not explicitly advertise for CWSN, i.e. there was no written policy on admitting these children. However, the mission statements of the two schools although not explicitly welcoming CWSN implicitly gave the impression that CWSN would be warmly accepted amongst the school community. For

instance, Millennium's mission statement states '*Millennium world is part of the Millennium family*', whilst Centenary's highlights '*our mission is to be a leading inclusive and culturally diverse school*' , both of these passages imply that the schools are pro inclusion and perhaps more importantly embrace diversity. This would appear to suggest that the two schools were admitting these children based on their interpretation of human rights, also evidenced from some teachers' interviews (see chapter 7) in that they believed in all children's right to a good education, despite their showing little understanding of current Western debates on such matters.

In considering the teachers views of the policies and practices that were in evidence in their schools, perhaps the most fundamental matter relates to the somewhat contradictory tensions that the teachers identified. On the one hand, many of the teacher respondents were able to identify practices that were inclusive and that they supported. The majority of the teachers reported that in their opinion, their schools were working to be inclusive. In some cases they were able to identify training that had been offered in the area of special needs. They were able to identify key times when a senior leader had offered them support with a particular child with special needs. They could also highlight practices in their schools that were unlikely to be encountered in other Pakistani school contexts but were intended to promote inclusion. However, simultaneously, they were also aware that their schools were in the education market and relied on high standards of academic attainment in order to attract and recruit students.

Other notable findings related to collaboration between the teachers and the leaders in their schools. Specifically, they reported that there were regular teacher / leadership meetings, collective problem solving and often shared decision making, in particular, towards the goal of providing an appropriate education for CWSN. These regular exchanges led to several of the teachers stating that felt that they were listened to and supported in their schools. This level of collaboration, as reported in these two schools, is unusual in the educational context of Pakistan, where private schools often follow a formal way of conducting their affairs and teachers are regarded as the executors of plans that they are being tasked with carrying out without discussion or questions being put. Indeed, and as

documented in the data chapters of this study, senior leaders were mentioned in terms of their expertise and insights in respect of inclusion as well as in supporting some of the teachers to take advanced courses of professional development in this area. In contrast, a small minority of the teachers reported that they had experienced a lack of support from their schools' leaders and one stated that she felt she was not allowed to try out different modes of delivery with her students.

One step, unusual given the Pakistani context, was that both schools were reaching out to parents of children with and without special needs to make them aware of their school's inclusive philosophy. In some cases, parents were supported towards a fuller understanding of their child's special needs by these schools and their teachers. Examples like these are rare in Pakistan where disability/special needs are still a taboo subject and where even the parents of CWSN may sometimes be unwilling to address their child's special needs. It should be reiterated here that in the Pakistani context, teachers enjoy a high status and many parents look to their advice. Consequently, teachers occupy a critical position in terms of their capacity to create a wider acceptance of children's special needs which these teachers in these two schools were doing.

### **9.3. What are these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion?**

As discussed in Chapter 7, there is a distinction between beliefs and values. Beliefs are opinions and assumptions that we hold about our social, structural and material world and they are generally constructed over time on the basis of our experiences. For example, if we were brought up in a society where CWSN were not fully respected or were marginalised and excluded, our beliefs about these children might be disrespectful or perhaps merely based on sympathy or pity. Our values stem from our beliefs to an extent, but will relate to matters that are of importance to us; so values like respect for difference, tolerance and inclusion will work alongside our beliefs. In addition, our beliefs and values may change over time as we have new and different experiences or come to understand things differently. In this thesis, I have argued that teachers act in their classrooms on the basis of their beliefs and on their values. Thus, those teachers who understand

that all children need to be included, that children are different in many ways and that these differences need to be respected in the pedagogy and practices of the school, are teachers who are well placed to support and maintain inclusive classrooms.

Most of the participant teachers at Millennium and Centenary Schools reported that they held favourable beliefs about including CWSN in their mainstream classrooms. In fact, some explicitly expressed the view that all children regardless of their abilities or needs have a right to education in mainstream schools. However, a small number of teachers, who whilst believing in inclusion as being the right approach for CWSN, were concerned that in practice it was unrealistic to think that it could always be facilitated. Their concerns centred on whole school pressures to achieve as well as practical matters such as lack of time, lack of teaching skills / knowledge about special needs and shortages of appropriate resources. In fact, drawing on some of their less positive experiences of working with CWSN, some teachers argued that specialist provision was essential in certain cases where disabilities were so severe that mainstream classroom teachers could not provide a good education experience for the children. Again, as I highlighted in chapter 6 and 7, even in more developed educational contexts, in the absence of adequate support teachers have reported difficulties in embracing special needs in mainstream classrooms (Kavale and Forness, 2000; Florian, 2008). Thus, to some extent, where there are teacher concerns, these may be more related to lack of resources and support rather than values and beliefs that lead to the exclusion of CWSN.

One factor that is sometimes used to support claims about the values and beliefs of teachers relates to the language that they employ. In my study some of the teachers at Centenary School described children using terms such as normal/abnormal, fixing/polishing, thus implying that CWSN needed mending in some way. The use of such terms, which could in certain contexts be regarded as derisory and insulting, might not carry the same meanings in the classrooms of my two study schools. Terminology changes over time and meanings/expressions evolve. Terms that are deemed to be unacceptable in one context may simply not be seen as such in other settings. What can be argued is that the use of these



terms demonstrated the lack of awareness of modern (western-driven) discourses of disability. What was evident was that this somewhat negative language was being used in Centenary School although the leadership did give clear guidelines about negative labelling of CWSN. Hence, it became apparent that there was a dissonance between Centenary's espoused beliefs and values and some of its teachers' views/understanding about CWSN. This could be attributed to Centenary's inconsistent professional development programme, which was more robust at Millennium, a matter returned to later in the chapter.

In sum, perhaps the crucial point that needs to be remembered in relation to the beliefs and values that teachers report and their in class practices is a fairly obvious one. Just because they espouse certain beliefs and values does not always mean that they can put these into practice. Just because they cannot put their beliefs and values into practice may have more to do with practical limits and the constraints that surround educational provision.

#### **9.4. How do these beliefs impact upon their pedagogical practices?**

The ways in which beliefs influence teachers' pedagogical practices are complex and not always evident, because beliefs do not necessarily translate directly into practice. They are mediated by context and tempered by situational constraints. From what my respondents said, and from what was evident in some of the classrooms that I observed, it seemed that teachers' commitments to meeting the learning needs of CWSN were most often being addressed through various forms of differentiation as described in chapter 8. A range of strategies were outlined by the teachers including: reducing the learning content, simplifying some of the materials, giving extra time and attention to CWSN and applying different modes of assessment to enhance learning opportunities for them.

In chapter 8 I argued that there could be limits to inclusion as a consequence of some of these differentiation strategies. In some instances where teachers were simplifying or reducing the content for CWSN, these practices raised concerns that the content of the curriculum might have been over-diluted so that the learning experience might have lost its meaning. Some differentiation techniques might not have been helping some CWSN to be included in these mainstream

classrooms as they may have been made to feel different because of being singled out from their peers. In all this, there are questions about the ‘practicability’ and ‘desirability’ of these differentiation strategies; how appropriate are these techniques and do they really support CWSN (Davies, 2000: 191).

There were examples of collaborative practices in these two schools involving students, teachers and parents working together to promote inclusion. Often teachers undertook cooperative learning and mixed ability grouping to promote inclusion and provide CWSN and their peers with opportunities to work together and be contributing members of the learning community in the classrooms. Some teachers believed that parental involvement was an important element in the inclusion of CWSN. Collaboration with parents is not usual in schools in Pakistan where parents are not generally regarded as key stakeholders in their child's learning.

My study has been centrally concerned with an exploration of inclusive practice in two primary schools in Karachi. In this work I have focused on the beliefs and practices of 30 classroom teachers in relation to children with special needs. When I started my research I had expected to find that teachers’ beliefs and values of the importance of inclusion would influence their pedagogy. What became evident as I talked to them and spent time in the two schools was that the relationship between beliefs and practice was not straightforward. Just holding a set of values that uphold the rights of all children to participate in education might not necessarily lead to inclusive practice, although they are a necessary precursor. What was evidenced by the teachers were some of the practical, material and pedagogical limits that influenced classroom practices. In making this point, this is not to criticise the two schools who participated in my study; all schools are contextually and situationally located and these factors will influence many aspects of teaching and learning. However, what did emerge was that promoting inclusion was complex, situated and involved a wide range of stakeholders in the school: children, their parents, teachers and senior leaders. What was evident was that inclusion is not a fixed state but a process – a way of thinking about teaching and learning that itself contains beliefs and values that are constantly in play, sometimes in contradictory ways, in the classrooms in these two schools.

### **9.5. Limitations of the study**

All studies have some limitations, which is an inevitable outcome of the research process. Briefly, I want to concentrate on one macro limit: the lack of data about special needs in Pakistan and second, some issues related to my sample as well as issues regarding my position in the field.

The lack of available information and data on the situation of people with disabilities in Pakistan was a major issue. The unavailability of any recent statistics regarding the number of CWSN studying in mainstream or special schools meant that it was hard to detail the complexities in the national situation. Most of the government websites identify the area of disability, however, even international agencies, like the UN, UNESCO, UNICEF and Save the Children, have been unable to provide detailed information about the education enrolment etc. of CWSN in their most recent reports. A major reason for this relates to the political complexity of Pakistan and an absence of census data. While it could be argued that my study was a qualitative account of what teachers can do in their schools in working towards inclusion, it might have been useful to set the work of the school in the larger context of current policies and practices in the country more widely. One of the reasons for the lack of up to date information could be based on the fact that there are two separate ministries for education and special education, where the latter has been merged with women's development and social welfare. In addition to the lack of data, there is a lack of research into inclusion in theory and practice in Pakistan, thus practitioners generally 'borrow' from western literature that may have less relevance and application in that context. For these reasons (lack of data and lack of a locally-based framework) my study has faced certain limits in its contextualisation.

Turning now to the matter of my sample, I wanted to explore what could be done in schools that had an inclusive approach towards CWSN. My argument was and is that if schools are built on a set of principles that value all children, then their beliefs will shape their practices. Schools do not need governments to lead them towards a human rights approach in their practices, although they will need support in this endeavour. In the context of Pakistan, where there is little or no

top-down support for inclusion in practice, I wanted to explore what could be done if schools had the desire to become inclusive. As a special needs worker in Karachi, I was aware that some schools had a reputation for being more inclusive and so I approached two of these schools in order to ground my ideas in the day to day working life of schools that did have a commitment to inclusion. I had a specific interest in how inclusion was actually being undertaken in classrooms, and with this aim in mind, I interviewed 30 classroom teachers. However, in hindsight I could have usefully included all the stakeholders involved in the process of inclusion: the head teachers, the leadership teams, the students as well the parents of CWSN.

One central concern that has to be revisited concerns my own position in the field. When I approached the two schools in order to try to negotiate access to the teachers, I contacted the head teachers who are also the owners and business leaders of these two private institutions. Part of their role lies with the selection and employment of teachers in their schools, thus, it could be argued that the teachers in Centenary and Millennium Schools may have seen me as an ally or acquaintance of their employer. This perception may have meant that they did not believe they could fully express their views in a formal interview situation where these were being recorded. It could also be the case that those teachers who did volunteer to participate (and some did not) were those who were more committed to working towards inclusive practices in their classrooms. I was aware of these potential constraints and while I believed that during my time in each school, teachers were reassured that their views were confidential, I believe that they were sufficiently at ease and were able to express at least some of their concerns (see chapter five for more discussion).

## **9.6. Contributions of the study**

This is the first study of its kind in Pakistan and the outcomes of my fieldwork suggest that things can be done to alleviate the gaps in educational provision for CWSN, a context where acceptance and provision for such children is difficult to achieve. On the practical side, dissemination of my findings regarding positive practices may provide some guidance for policy makers and other practitioners to follow. Earlier studies conducted in the field of inclusive education in Pakistan

have not researched the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practices. Through my investigation I have found that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive pedagogy are likely to be positive when there is supportive leadership, collaboration and adequate resources framed by a whole school ethos in favour of this approach.

In Pakistan where there is no effective legislation or compulsion for schools to promote inclusion these two schools were trying to include CWSN and the schools were at different stages in their development of inclusive practices (Rioux and Pinto, 2010). They were on a journey of inclusion where they were facing a range of challenges, and the teachers had different beliefs and commitments, but overall there was an ethos of inclusion which seemed to be influencing their pedagogy. One implication of my research is that leadership and commitment to inclusion has to come from the school managers and leaders; there needs to be a whole school approach towards inclusion and professional development has an influential part to play in this process.

### **9.7. Implications for policy/practice**

There has been little exploration, articulation and promotion of inclusive practice as it is being undertaken in schools, such as with the two schools in this research, as part of existing policies of the government in Pakistan. My small scale study was undertaken in two urban private primary schools which were more privileged in terms of motivated leaderships, enthusiastic teachers and they were relatively better resourced as they were in affluent areas of a large metropolitan city and could be taken as examples of relatively good practice as compared to practice in many less advantaged state run schools. In Pakistan, a country where the population is nearly 200 million, where the subject of special/inclusive education is still taboo there is a long way to go in education provision for children and for children with special needs. Further studies, such as a survey with larger samples drawn from across all four provinces of Pakistan are needed in order to get a bigger more accurate picture of the numbers of CWSN being enrolled in mainstream schools as well as what is being offered, teacher preparation and in-service provision in this area. In the meantime, micro level studies, such as mine,

can act as a starting point for future research in the context of Pakistan in that they can be used to illuminate the ways in which grounded and localised interventions could challenge and change beliefs and practices. Moreover, there is a need to strengthen mainstream schools by creating hubs of best practice for inclusion and I suggest that these two schools could provide such a function in the future.

### **9.8. My personal journey**

I have gained a great deal personally from undertaking this research. One of the benefits of undertaking this study is that I now feel better prepared to advocate for schools being able to make inclusion part of their own educational agenda. Another benefit is that I believe that my small-scale study provides support for my claim that schools, even in the most complex of settings, can start to develop inclusive practices, provided there is a whole school commitment to start this process. The two schools where I have conducted this work and the one I worked in for my from pilot study have not openly declared that that they are inclusive schools and neither do they all have written policies about meeting the needs of CWSN. However, what they do share is a commitment to try to do their best for children in their schools who have some difficulties in progressing their education when compared with their peers.

During the course of this study, there were times when I felt extremely enthusiastic about the project, but there were also bleak moments when I felt that it was beyond my capacity to manage effectively. Amongst these ups and downs one thing remained a constant and that was the passion that I feel for CWSN, for they are the ones who have given me new insights, they are my motivation and they always inspire me along with the teachers who work to support their inclusion and their right to an education. Undertaking this research has given me the opportunity to engage with brave head teachers and teachers, battling against many odds to create inclusive schools, and to meet cheerful and courageous children with special needs, who have been developing self reliance and their capacity to learn and grow alongside their peers. Finally, the point of the inclusive school is to ensure that we create classrooms 'where students with all sorts of labels come together as equals to form a new type of learning environment'

(Armstrong, 2012: 159). This is a major challenge for Pakistan, but the two schools in my study are part of the changes that are starting to take place.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1



#### INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

REC Protocol Number: REP (EM)/08/09-70

#### YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Exploring Inclusive Practice: A Study of Two Mainstream Private Primary Schools in Karachi, Pakistan

We would like to invite you to participate in this postgraduate research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

- This study aims to explore:
  1. How teachers understand inclusion?
  2. How do they identify special needs?
  3. What are the teaching strategies that teachers employ in order to promote inclusion?
  4. What strategies teachers employ when addressing the diverse learning needs of every child in their classroom?
- The respondents of the research study will be teachers.
- If you agree to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire. Submission of a completed questionnaire implies your consent to participate in the research study. Up to 15 willing respondents will be chosen to give a 60 minute semi structured interview and will be asked to sign a consent form before the interview.
- There are no risks involved in the study and the recordings of interviews will be deleted upon transcription.
- You and the school you represent will be offered a copy of the final report in order to share the benefits of the study.



- Arrangements for ensuring anonymity and confidentiality (see optional statements below for examples). To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act participants must be informed of what information will be held about them and who will have access to it (this relates to information that is identifiable or could potentially be linked back to an individual). If you agree to take part you will be asked whether you are happy to be contacted about participation in future studies. Your participation in this study will not be affected should you choose not to be re-contacted.

Talat Azad, Department of Education and Professional Studies, Kings College London SE1 9NH.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr. Chris Abbott, Reader in e-Inclusion  
Department of Education & Professional Studies  
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## Appendix 2

### CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

**Title of Study:** *Exploring Inclusive Practice: A Study of Two Mainstream Private Primary Schools in Karachi, Pakistan*

**King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref:** REP (EM)/08/09-70

- Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organizing the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part.
- The information you have submitted will be published in a PhD. Thesis. Please note that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify you from any publications.
- If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.
- *I understand that if I decide at any other time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and be withdrawn from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of publication or up until the point stated on the Information Sheet.*
- *I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.*

**Participant's Statement:**

I \_\_\_\_\_

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

**Researcher's Statement:**

I\_\_\_\_ Talat Azad

Confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the volunteer.

**Signed**\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 3

Background survey for teachers of primary grades 1-3

1. For how many years have you been teaching?
2. Are you a subject teacher or a class teacher?
3. How many children are there in your class if you are a class teacher?
4. What grades do you teach?
5. What subjects do you teach?
6. Do you teach children with special needs (CWSN)?

If yes, how many are there in the class/es you teach?

7. Would you be willing to be interviewed for a maximum of 30/60 minutes?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please fill in your:

Name:

Contact details:

Telephone no:

E-mail:

Note: when completed please return to researcher

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## **Appendix 4**

### Aide Memoire

Interview (semi structured) - 60 minutes

- School's support for teachers and students
- Preferred teaching style e.g. groups, formal classroom setting, techniques
- Motivation for teaching-what are likes /dislikes about teaching, attitude towards special needs, choice of a career in teaching
- Attitude towards inclusion/CWSN-how do they view differences, how their students learn....is it the same way or ....
- Assessment for learning- how do you assess students, how do different children need to be assessed
- Lesson planning – how do you plan a lesson and how do you make it accessible for all children

## **Appendix 5**

### **Research questions for the main study**

**RQ 1)** What are the teachers' views of the existing policies and practices that promote inclusion in two mainstream schools in Karachi?

**RQ 2)** what are these teachers' beliefs about special needs and inclusion?

**RQ 3)** how do teachers' beliefs about inclusion impact on their pedagogical practices?

## Appendix 6

The interview schedule for teachers at the Centenary School

Location	Date	No. of interview	Name of interviewee	Time of interview
At the teacher's residence	06/09/2010	1	Farzeen	08:05 am
(CS)	07/09/2010	2	Faiza	10:00 am
(CS)	08/09/10	3	Nausheen	03:00 pm
(CS)	09/09/10	4	Amal	10:10 am
(CS)	10/09/10	5	Asifa	11:30 am
(CS)	13/09/10	6	Asjad	12:30 pm
(CS)	14/09/10	7	Alina	8:00 am
(CS)	15/09/10	8	Mahreen	9:00 am
(CS)	16/09/10	9	Mercy	10:00 am
(CS)	17/09/10	10	Annie	12:00 am
(CS)	21/09/10	11	Maheen	08:00 am
(CS)	22/09/10	12	Rakhshanda	09:30 am
(CS)	23/09/10	13	Audrey	11:30 am
(CS)	24/09/10	14	Shireen	12:30 am
(CS)	27/09/10	15	Ghazanfar	11:30 am

## Appendix 7

The interview schedule for teachers at the Millennium School

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No. of interview</b>	<b>Name of interviewee</b>	<b>Time of interview</b>
(MS)	05/10/10	1	Talat	12:10pm
(MS)	06/10/10	2	Irfana	01:30pm
(MS)	07/10/10	3	Saima	10:15 am
(MS)	08/10/10	4	Afsheen	11:30 am
(MS)	11/10/10	5	Hameeda	08:50 am
(MS)	12/10/10	6	Iffat	10:15 am
(MS)	13/10/10	7	Ghazal	11:55 am
(MS)	14/10/10	8	Zeb	10:15 am
(MS)	15/10/10	9	Sumera	11:15 am
(MS)	18/10/10	10	Sameen	09:10 am
(MS)	19/10/10	11	Shaista	02:30 pm
(MS)	20/10/10	12	Adeela	11:10 am
(MS)	21/10/10	13	Marium	11:55 am
(MS)	22/10/10	14	Umbreen	02:00 pm
(MS)	25/10/10	15	Asma	12:20 pm



## **Appendix 8**

### **Field notes**

#### **Centenary School**

**200910**

Asifa shared that she has attended training in school which have been conducted at times by professionals from outside as well as teachers who have undertaken training from outside and then come and share with their colleagues. Still she felt that she need more specialised training to work with some CWSN. She felt that she was not skilled enough to handle example children with intellectual problems. She did not know how to address this kind of special need. She has not been given any training in this regard?

*Centenary does not seem to have a consistent in house professional development plan? Asifa should have been trained by now as the school was working on the lines of inclusion and every primary class including hers has CWSN?*

**270910**

- Teachers were working hard. They were motivated, stimulated. They were using multiple strategies .....
- Gaps widened when they shifted from class 1 onwards
- I felt included /welcomed / right from the ancillary staff-each morning I was greeted very enthusiastically starting from the gatekeeper to the domestic helping ladies around the school. They were serving me tea, snacks, attending to my other needs as well... example my recording devices, USBs, laptop, camera had to be put on charge which I was aided in doing most efficiently and effectively
- Students who are late in coming to school have to get their parents in to speak to the coordinator. They are listened to and if there is no valid reason then they are given a warning. This people's approach has been

effective in reducing the number of latecomers. Van drivers are also asked to be on time

*School leadership and their administrative staff were dealing with the parents and family in quite a congenial manner. I have seen it in the past how the relationship between the van drivers and the school administrations can take a very negative note, but here they treated each other with mutual respect!*

## **280910**

- Centenary school had a life skills training programme. The skills included theatre/drama, pottery making, roller skating and taekwondo. All the four teachers were trained professionals from the field.
- Taekwondo trainer suggested ....It develops self confidence in the individual that what I can do not everyone can do...everything is not about winning or losing... 'I am basically not training myself to compete with others, I am competing with myself, taking into account my own weaknesses and shortcomings...how to overcome them and become strong....it's a wide world and we have to prepare ourselves' ..... Also, in taekwondo aggressive behaviour gets redirected and so we do not react in a negative way, but respond constructively towards those children exhibiting aggression. It teaches respect and discipline.
- The theatre teacher reflects on how for students learning drama and acting, 'self confidence and self-esteem certainly get elevated through theatre...hidden skills are identified.
- Moreover, pottery and clay work lead towards, 'developing a positive form of interaction and activity beyond the classroom...'
- The trainer teaching skating was of the view that learning to skate brings 'all the learners together as regardless of their needs they got opportunities through this sport to learn and enjoy and we can see the beneficial role it plays when there is a visible change in their social and emotional behaviour'.

*The life skills training came as a surprise for me. An absolute novelty in the city of Karachi, which once the heart of Pakistan has now for some years been riddled with political conflicts and deteriorating law and order situation.*

*Amazing ideas by the school leadership to introduce such a programme which seemingly is benefitting all children!!! When I spoke to the trainers I was again awe struck at their dedication to their respected fields.....*

## **Field Notes Millennium School**

### **131010**

- Stop, look and listen strategy was being followed in the classes as outside the classrooms. When an adult spoke to the student, they had to stop, look at the person talking to them and listen to what they are being told to do.

*Millennium presented such a unique blend of discipline and child centred approaches. It was uniformity with a combination of*

### **151010**

- Teachers shared that every morning the whole teaching staff has an assembly with the principal in her office. I attended this meeting today...it was a general sharing of ideas, later being made into policies...rules and regulations. Everyday issues were also discussed example on my way to the school I saw an accident had taken place near the school between a car and a bus, some injured were taken by ambulances to hospitals, one hospital is nearby. As many of the staff must have witnessed it like me on their way to the school, it was discussed in this assembly and people were concerned about the injured etc...wanted to find out if there were any of the students or their parents involved.....

*The principal sure knew how to have her staff completely involved and engaged. I think it worked both ways the staff was involved and the principal knew what issues they were dealing with whereas the teachers knew what was coming their way. it certainly was a bit like testing the waters?*

- The walls outside the classrooms and in the corridors are 3/4 marble and are being used as soft boards for displays-good idea! No paper, pins are involved...less material less work...also the displayed material does not tear up and can be reused!
- Teachers have several duties like break duties, morning assembly duty as well as afternoon i.e. home time duty. They felt bogged down by these extra responsibilities
- Outside the class discipline plan- 2 monitoring forms in the playground: 1) pleased 2) disappointed

*If every school were to follow this kind of behaviour plan, there would be very minimal behaviour problems issues that this school has should*

## Appendix 9

Interview with Hameeda_MS 071010	Codes
T: thank you so much Hameeda for switching the times	
H: you are most welcome	
T: it was good of you to tackle this issue in a very cooperative manner	
H: I just thought that it will be a waste of time for you	
T: right	
H: any one of us can adjust	
T: thats good it shows team work	
H: Jazak Allah (Gods blessings)	
T: that you have cooperation and collaboration amongst the staff	Cooperation amongst teachers
H: Alhamdulillah[By God's Grace] it is there in the school as well, but I feel in juniors <sup>3</sup> it is the most	
T: really?	
H: yeah you will see	
T: how can you compare H?	
H: aam....I have been in this system since 10 year, I have seen people coming in going out	Personal experiences
T: ok	
H: I have seen people surviving as	Talks about her experiences with

<p>well (.) seen different heads as well. Before Huma I was with Shabnam, before her I was with Mrs. Noorani. When I joined in Mrs. Noorani had recently taken up the responsibility as a coordinator. She was the coordinator at that time and I had to take over her classes. So I have seen different people different managements. Dr. Ghazala is the principal but we are working under our teams</p>	<p>different school managements</p>
<p>T: and heads</p>	
<p>H: yes within our teams. I can say that</p>	
<p>T: so your journey started 10 years back? Your teaching career started?</p>	
<p>H: my teaching career started when I had done my intermediate that was in 1992. Then as the surrounding is in our culture, my mother didn't want me to stay back home and waste my time sleeping or watching TV. She wanted me to do something or the other, either go for stitching or cooking classes or go for go for something else. So I opted for teaching, I said I am not going to stitch I simply do not want to stitch I don't like stitching I can be at the other end. My family is into teaching actually.</p>	<p>Cultural choice of teaching as a career</p>
<p>T: ok</p>	
<p>H: 2 of my sisters are into teaching. My aunt was the head of BMB School several years back.</p>	
<p>T: huh</p>	

H: so I had seen teachers around me and I just thought to take it up as a profession. So I taught for 5-6 months at that time in a nearby school. Then I left but it gave a good exposure.	Family in teaching shared her initial experience
T: uhuh	
H: then (.) I told you yesterday that the fear that I had to live all alone in the house brought me to MS.	Personal fears
T: what happened after you did your intermediate?	
H: then I joined the university	
T: you taught for 5-6 months	
H: and then I joined Karachi University	
T: yeah	
H: I did my bachelors, BSc Honours and then I went to do my Masters as well and (.) before giving the masters exams I just thought of joining some other places. To be very honest we were living in Nazimabad at that time and I was looking around for a good school to join. I am from Habib Girls School <sup>4</sup> so when I think about a school	Educational stages
T: uhuh	
H: a school should look like a school	
T: yeah	
H: its environment, its structure (.). I still remember when I filled my form in 1998, there is a question in our form which asks why do you want to join MS?	
T: ok	
H: and I still remember I really wrote that down that the structure looks like a school building (1.2) I	Her belief of what a school should look like

<sup>4</sup> The primary school is divided into 2 levels, first level is The starters from pre nursery till class 2, second is juniors from class 3 till class 5...

feel that if the environment is not a school environment you will not be able to give your best. (1.2)	
T: ok. Continue please I am listening	
H: then after coming here, giving an interview I was Alhamdulillah (all praise be to Allah) selected. I was very pleased to meet Dr. Ghazala, because when I joined I just thought that principals are very bossy people they don't like to communicate much, but to my utmost astonishment when she confirmed my job, she stood up from her seat and she hugged me. That was so unusual from my previous experience and I felt great, <u>I really felt great</u> 11:33	Head teacher was welcoming
Restart 02:33pm	
H: I just thought yes this is the right place where I have come I actually maybe I am very sensitive and I feel that if these relationships, this warmth is not there then you cannot <u>survive in any kind of environment</u> . Then I continued with the job for 2 years then I had to leave the job, we went to Dubai. When my father expired after 2 months I got married in 2000	It was a friendly environment
T: in between your parents expired	
H: yes. No it wasn't settled at all. It happened out of the blues.	
T: 1992 your?	
H: between that my mother was alive and my father was alive. In 1998 my mother expired	
T: you were in school?	
H: I was doing my last year of masters. After her death I decided to join the school. Then I came here I got selected, then I started. In 2000 my father got cancer, I had to quit the job then (1.2) after 2 months of my father's death, I got married somehow. I still do not have any clues; we did not know each other at that time. Somehow Allah Taa'la	Personal journey

managed things and we got married. Then after that we went to Dubai, I was settled then and I was not working. Then we had a loss in our business and we had to come back to Pakistan. At that time I had a daughter and a son who was 4 months old. So I started my career again from Shawilayat School.	
T: ok. Which year was this?	
H: this was 2002. My experience was good enough because after working at MS I felt I can work anywhere.	
T: 1998 – 2000 you were working at MS	
H: yes.	
T: then you left and joined shah wilayat in?	
H: 2003. I worked there for 3 months on a crash programme which they had recently introduced. But I did not feel settled, there were various reasons so I resigned from there then I joined Beacon House School, I left that after 2 months, then I joined City School then I resigned from there after 3 months. Finally I came to Dr. Farzana and I said I am unable to survive anywhere else!!!, please adjust me somewhere	Career placements
T: huh	
H: she said we don't have any space right now but we will think about it. Aa...i was very immature at that time I suppose. I was not very punctual, like this is what I feel about myself. Being an only child I was a spoilt brat. I had never done anything in my life which I had to do personally or take care of. The school taught me how to be a responsible adult, honestly. I got a call from Dr. Farzana that they were starting their own crash programme, as they had opened two new sections, G and S were there and they were starting 3 E and V	<p>Personal reflections on her personality</p> <p>Virtues learnt during time at MS</p>



T: what do these alphabets stand for; I thought they were just sections	
H: no they are from our school objectives	
T: please enlighten me	
H: quality education through academic excellence. I am also confused.	
T: So what does G or S stand for?	
H: they stood for Generations school in the beginning. When they started to expand their sections then they started to use the others like V is from the values and E is from education, all derived from their objectives. This is what I like about the school they always had a vision, a reason for doing things, we were not ....as a team we were told and asked for suggestions. We were told how these things are taking place; we were not kept in total darkness and things never came as a shock to us. This is what I really appreciate, because they are not bound to share anything with us we are going to obey whatever they say, but still trusting their employees, trusting the people around them, trusting them with the responsibilities, I think that is <u>something very important!</u> Then I joined back in 2004 and I am still here and still going to continue Insha'Allah. This is my journey	<p>school vision</p> <p>shared decision making</p> <p>Teachers are trusted by their leaderships</p>
T: and your children	
H: they are in this school from pre nursery. My eldest daughter is in class 4 now. She is an author, write Mashallah. She is very fond of writing and reading books. Then I have got a son who just participated in the role play <sup>5</sup> you just saw in the beginning	<p>Family –children studying in the same school</p> <p>Mother was proud to talk about her children's accomplishments</p>
T: really which one was him?	
H: he was in the beginning of the	

<sup>5</sup> IQRA (Arabic word meaning to read) BOOK WEEK was being celebrated in the school and classes were doing role plays on their selected texts from stories

Hare and Tortoise story. He came and introduced them.	
T: oh I missed that	
H: oh you did. You should have seen that.	
T: I am just around the school and there is so much going on that it is difficult to capture.	
H: yes we have so much going on we are always on our toes. I have got little one as well she is in KG. 3 children and Alhamdulillah settled.	Lots of activities around the school keep teachers occupied
T: so how has the journey been like, you have given me a background how you came to MS, your experience with other educational institutions so tell me about your CR and the subjects you teach	
H: Talat I found it very challenging in the beginning because the students who are coming to us with special needs how are we going to cater to them. 3 years back I had a girl in my class who is now in class 6. She was a patient of Rubella.	To teach CWSN was challenging in the beginning
T: rubella	
H: yes	
H: it is a disease where one by one all the organs get affected	
T: we are given vaccines for it in childhood	
H: yes but still	
T: MMR measles, mumps and rubella	
H: yes	
T: the organs get affected and what happens?	
H: they lose their vitality. So this girl is totally deaf. Completely. When I got her in my class I was really shocked. I really felt bad about it because at that time even my own children were very small and I used to think ... whenever I get such students I really feel we should be so thankful to Allah Taala we take things for granted until and unless we don't actually come across these things. I did not know	Teacher empathises with this CWSN who had lost her hearing because of her medical condition  Thanks God for all her blessings

how to communicate my messages to her. I met the parents first, I found out everything about her and they told me that all the connections internally are completely destroyed and she has got a chip and a micro connection from the spinal cord. Her father was a pilot and he was stationed in US at that time when she was born, so he got all these benefits and got her treatment there. At times her batteries would not work or use to finish and that was a problem as then she was unable to listen to anything at all.	Meetings with the parents to understand the special needs of her student
T: with that micro chip in her brain?	
H: no attached somehow to her spinal cord	
T: ok	
H: and at the back of her ear	
T: so she used to listen because of that, it was possible for her to listen	
H: <u>yes</u>	
T: and?	
H: there was an instrument attached at the back of her ear	
T: was it a hearing aid?	Child wears a hearing aid
H: yeah	
T: huh	
H: so she able to hear and then I recalled a lesson which we learnt in class9 about Helen Keller that her teacher used to make her learn with her lips, so I started doing that with her. I was shocked I wasn't sure whether she would be able to understand me or my lip movement, but thank God she did.	Teacher thinks of ways to communicate with her
T: which class was this?	
H: class 3	
T: so she had gone through all these classes	
H: surgeries. Yes classes. Then we developed a very good rapport Alhamdulillah. She was very comfortable. <u>She is an artiste</u> , so I used to give her those kind of chores where her ability could come out and she would feel proud of herself.	Teacher student rapport  Teacher gives her tasks according to her interest and abilities

When people used to say <i>oh wow you have made this, we don't believe it!</i> In this way her academics started improving as well. She was at a very low level in the beginning. Her parents literally cried and I felt really bad about it. I thought no matter how much time she is with me it is my duty to give something to this child. Alhamdulillah I feel I have done my part when the child still comes to me.	Teacher feels proud at this CWSNs accomplishments  Teacher felt morally and ethically responsible to cater for this child and her special needs  Considers it a worthwhile experience
T: so what other strategies did you develop for her? You say you gave her tasks that improved her social skills and academically?	
H: academically at times I had to sit with her after 10 -15 minutes for whatever she had missed out, whether it was in English or Urdu. I am not very good in Maths, I am somehow scared of numbers, so	Giving extra time and attention
T: huh	
H: so wherever I could help her I used to because I felt that she is now comfortable with me. She had a sister also in the same class. That sister was also burdened, emotionally very disturbed because of this child. The parents used to give her lots of responsibilities of this child like <i>you are more matured, you have to take care, you have to do this, you have to do that.</i> Then I had to counsel the parents as well that you are expecting a class 3 child to be a mother	Continued assistance from the teacher  CWSN sister over burdened by the parents to take care of her sibling  Counselling for the parents to let go
T: yes	
H: how can you expect this! Let her enjoy her age, we are there to help you out. You should be there for your child. Don't give all the responsibilities to the other little one. Things worked out very well after that. Alhamdulillah she is much stable now	Teachers assures the parents of her support
T: this sister. She is ok physically?	
H: yes. She is one year junior to her maybe, but the parents kept this	Parental pressure on the sibling to be with CWSN

child with her sister always so that she can support her sister.	
T: has this child physically deteriorated	
H: no not at all	
T: you said it is a progressive thing?	
H: but it aa...i am not in contact with the parents these days but during that year they told me that internally her things are getting worse.	
H: she had lost her hearing, there was problem with her heart and at that time she had also developed some problems with her eyes. For this reason she had to wear glasses of very heavy power. All these things happened with her. I cannot comment of her present medical condition as my association is over now as I have not spoken to her parents. I always tell the child that she can always come to me if she has any difficulty. At times she does come to me, but it has been a year since she has not come, because last year I was quite irregular as my husband was suffering from heart problem and I was really disturbed. I have lost contact with her.	CWSN multiple health issues....eyes problem...
T: you have seen her around school	
H: yeah and she comes to me at times to say hello, how are you or to share anything that she has made, a drawing or some writing of hers.	Good teacher student relationship
T: how about other kids with special needs in your class?	
H: I also had a dyslexic child in my class who was severely dyslexic. He wrote letter reversals like <i>b, d, p 9 and</i> . he used to read in that way as well. When he came to my class, my coordinator shared that he does not like to read in front of the class as they make fun of him. At that time I was taking science as well for class 3, now I take class 5 and 6 for science.	Identification of child's special needs by the leadership. Teacher was updated on the child's special needs.
T: you take class for 3 for ?	
H: class 3 for English. So we had	Teacher 's way of paving the way

chapter <i>diversity</i> . So I took up that chapter and whenever I need support in my classes I take up that chapter. We talked about diversity and how	for students to accept and collaborate to understand special needs
Boring it would be if everybody was the same with the same qualities, if everybody drew whom will I ask to draw, or if everyone read well whom will I ask to read. It will be so boring everybody will be so <u>same</u> . Then I gradually gave them this concept that we have to respect each other no matter what. Then Alhamdulillah the acceptance was there in the class. They heard him, he used to read, when it was his turn to read. He used to make reversals while reading, but his mistakes gradually reduced Alhamdulillah. Why? Because he was given that confidence nobody was laughing at him, he was given that kind of time to decode the word first and then speak. We used to wait for him, even if it was three lines only. Now he is in class 6 Mashallah. He is doing really well and has improved. I am teaching him science now and I see those letter reversals now also, but we both laugh at them and !!!!he corrects them quickly.	Student with student collaboration in accepting special needs  Giving confidence
T: he does realize then	
H: yes he does	
T: so these were the strategies that you used while teaching CWSN in your classroom?	
H: Yes also peer support is a must, the child cannot work if he or she is stressed or does not trust the partner who they are sitting with.	Peer support for CWSN is essential
T: how did you eliminate this stress level? One thing you did was built up his confidence right? What other ways did you employ to eliminate those stresses?	
H: I used to spend some time during the snack time with them	Teacher donates her snack time to give this child time
T: a large group?	

H: yeah. Where we could all sit and chat. I did not want make him feel that you are somebody totally different from others and you should be treated in a different way in a corner, <u>why?</u> why should he be treated that way? If he was that bad and if he would be treated in that way then he should be in a special school why should he be here?	Yet tried to maintain that the child should not be stigmatised because she was giving him more time  Teacher beliefs strongly in giving this child opportunities
T: do you think he should have been in a special school?	
H: no that is what I am saying that if he is not in a special school if he was able to survive in the environment that means he has the potential. So why can't we take out some time and create that kind of an environment for him where he can relax. His work used to very untidy at times,	Opportunities for CWSN to grow in a mainstream environment  Teacher beliefs in unconditional inclusion
then I used to sit with him and tell I am so sad I am so unhappy, I cannot see anything, what shall we do? Then he used to come up with this idea, <i>shall I do this part again?</i> Will you be able to do it? <i>Yes teacher I can!</i> Ok let's try it out. So things worked Alhamdulillah. Its a long journey Talat, but honestly speaking I have started to enjoy this journey. At times when my children were small I used to be very stressed out, honestly! With such CWSN in class I used to feel, how am I going to complete my syllabus, my colleagues are far ahead	Extra support  Creating a good working rapport with CWSN       Presence of CWSN mixed with stress of syllabus completion
T: why did you feel that way?	
H: of course the syllabus stress is there on the teacher as well! We are given a syllabus and we have to complete it within the given time and if I am slow, how can that teacher wait for me, what are they going to do with those 30 students in that class? So I have to adjust with her? I have to take extra blocks at times; I had to spend extra time with them individually, just to keep	Presence of CWSN mixed with stress of syllabus completion       CWSN demand extra time

<p>my class moving. The other 3 sections can't wait for only 1 section I understand that. So I used to feel quite stressed out. I used to feel that things are not going to work that way. Recently I got a girl in my class who has got listening problem. She has got no problem with her organs, she is perfect Alhamdulillah<sup>6</sup>, but she does not want to listen. She wants to do things on her own way. When I was going through her work I was shocked because my 3 days planning was wasted, she had made a mess in the exercise book, and I was really very upset! The day was very hectic already, so I did not know what to do? How do I manage? How do I complete 3 days of planning (lessons) with her all over again? We were actually introducing brainstorming and composition writing to them. So I was at a loss I looked at their time table and saw Nazra<sup>7</sup> block there. So I requested the Nazra teacher that If it was not something very important can I take this child out and the teacher agreed, because they were reviewing the previous concepts at that time. So I took this child out in the resource room and made her do all those things again which she could not understand in the class, it was just because she was not ready to listen. Then I made her understand that darling if you are not going to listen how are you going to finish your work. I showed her other students work and asked her should I give you a star on your work, she quickly said <i>NO!</i> SO WHAT SHALL WE DO? When its listening time my dear we have to</p>	<p>CWSN with concentration/ understanding problems</p> <p>Teacher cooperation</p> <p>Teacher gives up her resource time for CWSN</p> <p>Teacher gives individual attention</p>
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<sup>6</sup> Alhamdulillah word from Arabic and Urdu language means all praise be to Allah

<sup>77</sup> Nazra means learning to read the Holy Quran



listen to the teacher! Then I completed the 3 day lessons in one block with her. It required individual attention. I told her as well that things cannot go on like this. Be careful in the class, you have to listen very carefully and from that day I have observed her that, now when I say <i>listening time</i> she understands that if I will not listen then I won't be able to manage my work. But children are children, they tend to forget and have to be reminded again and again. Then I had parent teacher meetings (PTM) with her parents as well. I called the parents shared the strategies and how to work with her and Alhamdulillah I can see improvement there.	Parental involvement
T: Coming back to what you just said a while back about that child in your class who had dyslexia, about such CWSN, which setting would you say is the best for them	
H: I feel Talat	
H: first of all in this instance (the above mentioned case) we have to identify whether this child really has dyslexia or has adopted this behaviour for some reason or the other.	
T: huh	
H: I had a child who somehow became dyslexic and then I had to investigate, go into details and found out that he was being threatened and bullied as well as at times physically mistreated by his male servant. Then I had to call his mother; it was very tough issue to share with his mother because parents are not ready to accept that such a thing is happening in their house. I had to share it with Humna [headmistress for juniors], then we all sat together, talked and sorted it out and we had to give some extra time to that child, now he is in class	Teacher identifies special needs  Teacher, leadership and parents try to resolve issues with students

8. We can see a drastic change; now he is no more dyslexic!	
T: I mean in the first place he wasn't dyslexic, why would he opt for certain things, what was he doing? His mistakes?	
H: he started writing letter reversals, he was quite distracted, he was quite upset when he had to answer something I could see him shaking like this (teacher acts out)	
H: He was threatened like <i>I will hit you if you are going to say something!</i>	
T: just the threatening had so much impact?	
H: yes for a class 3 child, it would. If the parents are not ready to listen to you	
T: the parents investigated, was it really happening	
H: yeah. It was and they threw the servant out after that	
T: was the child better after that?	
H: but you know Talat during my years of work I have found out that somehow the mothers have become very careless. They are very relaxed when their children are away, busy with something or somebody else. This kind of culture really creates issues you shouldn't be relaxed when your child is very happy with somebody else or somewhere else. You must investigate either it is something very good or it is something really horrifying. As a mother I feel these things. My father was a very different kind of a person and he used to read a lot. When I was young we used to get those magazines, with The News (English newspaper) and my father used to get them. My mother was not a very literate person and was not very fluent in English. So my father used to tell my mother please tell her to read this article, she must read it	Teacher beliefs about parenting
T: ask her to tell you to read?	

H: yes he never used to tell me directly, because it was all about child sexual abuse, children going to places without parental permission and then causing problems for others. So he never used to tell me directly.	
H: during our talks he used to give me clues, ideas and suggestions. This is what I feel parents should be doing and we are not getting such parents. They are very seldom these days	Teacher beliefs about how parenting should be
T: interesting example that you mention. You have catered to CWSN in your classroom over the years, so was this set up the right place for them?	
H: no. I feel that they should be treated in a separate way where the syllabus should be a lighter and they should get more chances to have hands on things. They might not work very well in academics even in O and A levels but then they should be made aware of their skills. Ok if the child is not doing very well in academics he or she may be a very good artiste or a material maker anything	Teacher s beliefs about inclusion Teacher thinks curriculum should be less theory and more practical work for CWSN  Give CWSN multiple options to perform ...academics and other mediums Curriculum differentiation
T: so you are suggesting that curriculum should be modified	
H: for these students if we are ready to cater to these students in our classes then we must not pressurise them. At times I used to feel sympathy for these children; I used to feel that we are asking too much from them as well as their parents. We got parents who were ready to work with their children but <u>how much?</u> If a mother has 4 children and 1 child has dyslexia as I know of a case. The father was very demanding and she had to give time to the other children also, so how much time can she give to one child? How much? If the challenges are bit at a lower level then the child	No pressure on CWSN  Teacher beliefs of CWSN are taxed as well as their parents  Empathises with parents

would feel stronger from inside	
T: in a mainstream set up?	
H: yes in a mainstream setting	
T: huh	
H: certain modifications need to be done. For e.g. if they are going for their art class, I feel there the achievement targets and the skills offered should be different according to the ability of the child. For games if he is not good at catching the ball judging the distance and speed then fine he should be doing something else. Rather than putting him under pressure	Modifications in the curriculum  Different achievement targets for CWSN
H: Humna has given us a lot of space Alhamdulillah when we have these students in our class some are very slow because either they are too pampered at home or they are the only child and the mother is continuously after them dictating, they are not independent. They want a similar setting in the class as well which of course we cannot provide to them. To some extent we do but of course we cannot for the whole block, like sit with that child. So Humna's suggestion is if that child cannot copy all the work from the board, let him copy 5 sentences. He should get the concept. Right! If he is unable to finish his work on time, ask him to look at the questions on the board and just write the answers, no need to copy the questions.	Parents ask for similar treatment as given at home which is difficult to provide in school  Differentiate the task for the CWSN support from the leadership
T: these are her instructions?	
H: yeah and we felt	
T: so this was a modification that you did	
H: yeah and we really appreciate that. Even we are sure whatever we are doing is going to be understood by our heads, even if there is not much written work of that child in the copy. If the concept is understood and he knows how to do it fine! Even we are relaxed and not	Teachers are supported by the leadership when they are differentiating the learning tasks for some CWSN

stressed at all.	
T: so how many CWSN per class, I mean the classes you have taken?	
H: at times Talat to be very honest at times I had 2, at times only 1 and at times 3 in a class	
T: do they always have a set name that so and so child has this problem or you have discovered it yourself?	
H: usually we discover it ourselves	Teacher discovers special needs
H: I feel that way is we should not make up our mind about any child or say label him or her or have assumptions beforehand. Why? Maybe he was disturbed this year or he doesn't want to be the same as he was in class2 or maybe he was different previously and he is going to work better in this class. So we try and evaluate the new class students over the period of 6 weeks. During the first unit we usually come to know the kind of students we have. At times the behaviour and attitude give clues. At present I have a child in my class who makes obnoxious sounds in my block. Who keeps fidgeting with his stationary all the time, but if you ask him any questions he will answer very quickly. He never sits straight, it never seems that he is interested in whatever is going on in the class, his appearance would look very untidy at times, but who am I to judge all these things. Of course I am a human being if a child comes to me, he sits in my class for 2-3 blocks and I feel I will have difficulty in dealing with this child, but with the passage of time we realise that it is not so	No to labelling  Evaluation of children's needs in the initial 6 weeks at start of the term
T: Huh	
T: So Hameeda interesting very interesting, what do you like most about teaching? The best part?	
H: aa... when I see a change and Alhamdulillah I always see a change in my children and everybody else	Personal joy by seeing change in children

must be watching those changes in these children, that is the time when I really enjoy	
T: change like what?	
H: changes like they are more settled, more organised, they know how to behave, how to sit. My classes are Alhamdulillah quite organised and my colleagues and my coordinator will second that. I have got a very loud voice and whenever I speak people used to feel as if I am shouting.	
T: hh	
H:!! I am very unlucky in this sense. Now I try to use my gestures more, like look in my eyes...	
T: with the class?	
H: with the class. My facial expressions. All these techniques are being taught to us and we are learning during the passage of time. Khadija [Vice principal] used to come to my class and observe or in the corridor and she never used to make us feel that she was observing. Then afterwards she used to tell me to slow down and walk away with a smile. Humna also used to hint at these things and walk away with a smile. So I was learning at the same time I was not being pressurised or threatened and I was relaxed and once the teacher is relaxed in the class, then things go smooth Alhamdulillah.	Changes in the personal self
T: so those are the achievement that children exhibit which you enjoy and like. Are there any dislikes to teaching or anything that you feel is a barrier restricting you or a challenge?	
H: at times Talat the amount of correction. Of course I understand it is a must to check the students work regularly and on time, we are unable to guide them at the proper time. Once it is done if it is not rectified immediately then the child won't be	Dislikes amount of correction

<p>able to understand things, but I feel like I have 3 children and I give tuitions at home in the evenings so I don't get time to do corrections at home. With my children studying in the same school I have a lot of work with them as well. I feel that the teachers should be given a little more time for their corrections or for their work. Because if we are not prepared then what are we going to deliver? Going in the class, giving out the lectures or giving them work every day I don't feel it is enough. The work load should be a little less on the teachers so that they can complete their corrections on time. E.g. I had 2 resource blocks in the morning and they were taken by IQRA WEEK, now I don't have any resource block, so when do I do my corrections? I had 2 resource blocks on Tuesday and were used for the PTM as I had to meet 5 parents, when do I check children's work? So I feel this work load should be a little less so that we complete our tasks and we can give the feedback to the students at the right time for e.g. if they have done a composition, within the week I should be able to give the exercise books back and I should be able to give them individual feedback.</p>	<p>Lesser workload would be appreciated</p>
<p>Then for individual feedback I am going to collect all the exercise copies and ask the students to stay back during snack time, which is only for 20 mins so they take their snacks for 10 mins as they need time, they are children</p>	
<p>T: of course</p>	
<p>H: even they need break. So if you have stopped 5-8 students and you are telling them the brainstorming that you have done is not correct and you have to understand how to do it again. They will try and take more time to understand. I feel that</p>	

the planning should be a little less and the resource block should be longer so that we can give them individual attention	
T: have you brought this too the notice of the management.	
H: I don't think it is possible.	
T: why you don't think it is possible?	
H: I have talked to Humna about it. Like not only me many other teachers have the same issues.	
T: is there a solution to this problem	
H: there is no solution Talat. I understand that part also. So there is no point in taking such issues further. I was very stressed as we were trying to make a our children scholars like Socrates from this level, why so much stress? But when I saw the O level syllabus, I felt oh my God, if we do not prepare them from the beginning they won't be able to go that far. We have to make them do all this. We keep on juggling and trying to do our level best. These are the issues that are in my mind and something should be done about them.	No solution to this problem. Teachers are juggling in making adjustments and grappling with their tasks.
T: but you feel that nothing can be done about them?	
H: but still something can be done. For e.g. we can have separate reading teachers for clas3,4, 5 and 6s. It is going to be too much on the school's part as they have to pay for so many people. But don't you think that it is going to improve the reading skills when the reading teacher is going to take the reading?	Finds a solution in reading teachers for class 3 onwards to lessen the burden of some teachers
T: you do have reading teachers don't you?	
H: till the starters	
T: in the starters ok. But I heard for class 3 and 4 also	
H: we used to have them till last year we had them	
T: yeah that is what I was told now I remember	



H: that time when the reading teacher was there, it was fewer burdens on us because	Reading teachers lessen the burden of other teachers
T: only English?	
H: yes	
T: and Urdu	
H: no. this is saddening again as it should be there for Urdu as well or maybe the teacher should be able to cater to both the subjects, like even we teach our children both English and Urdu. Urdu is our mother tongue, I do not understand this issue that when people say <i>I am so good in English but I cant teach Urdu or I can't deal with Urdu at all</i>	Teacher proposes reading teachers for Urdu as well not just English
T: huh	
H: you were born into this language, you were brought up with this language, you might not be very good in the technical aspect of the language like the grammar etc. but you can listen to the reading at least.	
T: you have made a point. we have talked about the challenges, Tell me about ..when you encounter these challenges then you try and counter these problems, what is the leaderships ' outlook/ role in this? How do they deal with it? E.g. you have child x in your class and you are dealing with it, do they know about it ?	
H: Usually Humna know s about it	
H: yes and if there is any issue that needs special attention or where we feel that we are unable to communicate with the parents or the parents are not very welcoming and not ready to talk about it, then we request our coordinators to intervene. Alhamdulillah I have never gotten such parents. I have always had very cooperative parents, my rapport with parents have Alhamdulillah always been very good and smooth, I have had no issues.	<p>Leadership intervention in case of problem situations</p> <p>Parental involvement to resolve issues</p>

T: how does the leadership view this, your handling of these situations, are they supportive?	
H: they do. at times we need them when we are doing this <i>brainstorming and composition writing</i> when we are doing stuff that needs individual attention, then we request our coordinators e.g. Humna was the coordinator till last year , so I used to request her to come to my class because this works needs individual attention and I will not be able to manage that on my own	
T: yeah	
H: so can you please come	
T: fine. That was done it was one to one basis, but altogether I am trying to explore what has been the leadership's role in supporting the CWSN?	
H: they are there with us, they don't bother us	School support
H: I would say ... I feel that this shows that they trust us, they don't interfere, they don't call us and ask for individual students but they are with us whenever we need attention or need their cooperation in any area, they are there	School trusts teachers
T: they are there. Coming back to children in your class, like you said that you were told once and do not make this child read in class as children make fun of him and the other examples you have shared. So in light of the above what is the relationship/ the behaviour of children with and without special needs towards each other ? the child who is facing a problem and the behaviour of other children towards him?	
H: in the beginning sometimes these children[CWSN]feel that people do not associate with them easily, the reason for them to feel threatened, feel arrogant, rebellious as why can't we get the same as the other	Behaviour of children with and without special needs towards each other  CWSN feel rebellious when not treated fairly

person is getting which could be in terms of marks, in terms of positive attitude of the fellow students as well as sorry to say teachers. In the beginning they do cause trouble as some of them bully, some become very messy and untidy	
T: CWSN bully or the others bully them?	
H: at times CWSN also bully, just to hide their weaknesses they do bully. At times they fiddle with other children's stuff and then they are so quiet and calm in front of you that you would be after the other child's life to leave this child alone, but reality is different. I have experienced this personally, then you have to be proactive	CWSN might bully or be bullied
T: what is different?	
H: at times CWSN are the bullies but they are so calm and quiet and act so innocent which makes you think oh my God the others are troubling them, but it is not that in fact these children are going and causing the trouble. So then you have to talk to them. That is the reason I feel if we are eased of the pressure of checking etc..Then we <u>can give them more time, we can spend more time with them and talk to them in a relaxed way.</u> We are humans also and to be very honest at times I don't want to do anything during my break except sit back, relax and have my cup of tea.	<p>CWSN might bully but not be caught</p> <p>CWSN need to be counselled</p> <p>Teacher beliefs more time is needed to talk to CWSN and make them understand.</p> <p>Views pressure of taking out time for such practices</p>
H: as a teacher I feel that feeling shouldn't be there, but at times it is, because I am human	
T: you are honest. So you are saying that mostly it is negative behaviour displayed towards each other	
H: yes. Then you have to develop an environment in the class where all can work together. Usually I have noticed Talat that some students in the class are quite matured. You do get a few of them and you have to	CWSN and their peers act in a negative way but teacher sees it as her responsibility to create congenial working classroom environment.

utilize them very proactively.	
T: uhuh	
H: you have to assign different jobs; various tasks to them, just to support the weak ones without making them conscious and making them feel that the support is because we love them. Until and unless this feeling of sympathy is replaced by the feeling of love, those children are not going to show any progress. That is what I feel; maybe other people have different ideas.	Teachers views of inclusion
T: how about their behaviour towards each other outside the classroom?	
H: the problem is that when I deal with class3 students do develop some habits which they did not have in class2 as it is a totally different section, it is already very difficult for the little ones to adjust in class 3, (that is the transition). In class 2 they are only familiar with 1 or 2 teachers going and coming in the class, taking care of everything. Now in class 3, there are 8 teachers taking various subjects and those 8 have different ideas, different rules etc. so the students who are struggling [CWSN] these students do take time to understand that.	Transition issues for all students as well for struggling ones
T: how do you assess CWSN?	
H: the assessments are planned in a way that enables us to see that the students have understood the concept. Application part should be there and it is	Conceptual understanding in assessment for CWSN
T: I want to know what do you do?	
H: application part is there Alhamdulillah	
T: what do you mean by application part?	
H: for e.g. if they are doing nouns, then asking them to underline and circle the nouns is very childish so we give them a concept of common and proper nouns, we make a list of common nouns e.g. school, class,	

hotel in one corner and we ask them to write the proper nouns for them as a daily practice.	
T: ok so this is how you are assessing them	
H: yes	
T: and how do you plan your lessons for including CWSN?	
H: we plan our lessons in a way that we are able to cater to each child's needs. It is usually not too challenging, for written work we do take care. In previous years Talat to be very honest, we were giving long written assignments to the students, but then with the change of management Alhamdulillah we are very happy with Humna. She gave us the suggestion and advice as to why stress out CWSN. Even after doing 10 sentences they are going to achieve the same so why not do 5 sentences.	Lesson planning for inclusion
T: these are children with difficulties	
H: yes and normal children as well and usually at the back of our classrooms we have extra worksheets so the ones who finish their work on time, either they can draw or do those work sheets	
T: do you plan on a weekly basis, monthly..?	
H: ok. We plan it on a weekly basis. In the summer when we come to school in July we plan for the 1 <sup>st</sup> 2 terms. First term and second term	
T: the year has 2 terms	
H: yes that is a broad plan. Then when we come back in August we plan on a weekly basis.	
T: ok. Tell me about the training opportunities over the years	
H: a lot of chances Alhamdulillah have been provided by the school. Usually we are not bound to go to all the training sessions, we can decide on our own, based on our need. At times the management	Good training opportunities over the years

decides who goes where, but from my side after working for so many years I feel now I am in a position (maybe) that I should go for something beyond this. I should be able to plan and provide something for CWSN or a modified curriculum for them. I want to do something.	More specialised training for CWSN
T: brilliant all my good wishes are with you. Best of luck. We have exceeded the time and thank you very much	
H: you are welcome, it has been a pleasure	

Note: This is read alongside the code map (figure 5.1, pg.101 ) presented in chapter 5 of this thesis.